Thursday, January 15, 2026 No 15 ₹7

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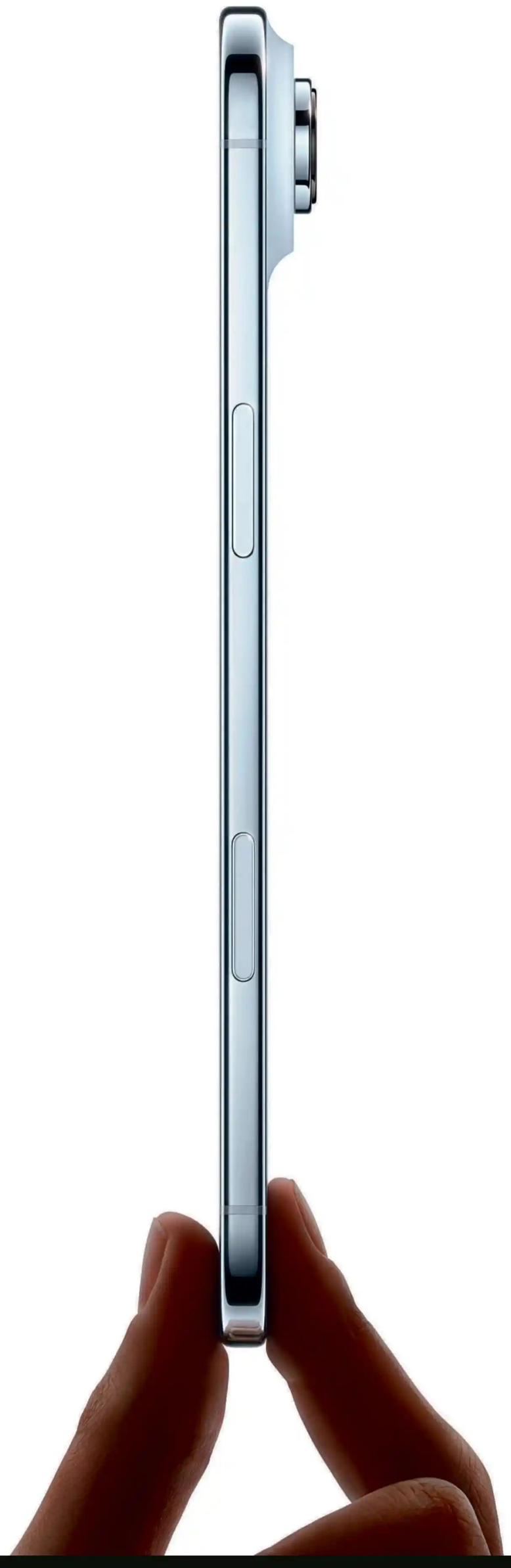

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The Power of Good

Mitchell hits ton as NZ down India

Rahul century in vain as Kiwis level series

Page 16

Trump renews threat on seizing Greenland

Denmark to beef up military in semi autonomous island

NEW YORK/COPENHAGEN, AGENCIES

President Donald Trump said Wednesday that "anything less than" getting Greenland would be "unacceptable", hours before the first meeting among the governments of Greenland, Denmark and the US since he escalated his push to buy or get the semi-autonomous Danish territory.

"The United States needs Greenland," Trump wrote on Truth Social, doubling down on his argument that it was necessary for national security and that Russia or China would take control of the territory.

"NATO becomes far more formidable and effective with Greenland in the hands of the UNITED STATES," he wrote. The post was likely to add to tensions as the foreign ministers of Denmark and Greenland were expected to meet with Vice President JD Vance and Secretary of State Marco Rubio at the White House later Wednesday.

Although representatives of the three governments have sat down together before, this is the first meeting called to discuss Trump's repeated threats to get Greenland. He has turned up the pressure this year, apparently emboldened by the success of the US military operation in Venezuela.

Trump said last week that he was "going to do something on Greenland, whether they like it or not".

Denmark's leader has said that a US attack on Greenland would destroy the Nato alliance. The country is planning to beef up its military presence in Greenland.

Greenlanders protest against Trump's threats to seize the island. AFP FILE

The United States needs Greenland. NATO becomes far more formidable and effective with Greenland in the hands of the UNITED STATES
DONALD TRUMP

Rafale jets: Govt to look into IAF plan for biggest defence deal

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Defence Ministry may soon consider the Indian Air Force's long awaited proposal to buy 114 Rafale fighter jets from France in a government to government deal in order to replenish the IAF's depleting squadron strength.

A decision from the Defence Acquisition Council chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is expected in the near future before French President Emmanuel Macron's planned India visit next month.

While defence ministry officials told *DH* the deal was under negotiation, a news agency has reported quoting sources that it would cost around Rs 3.25 lakh crore and the combat jets would have 30% indigenous content.

If approved, this would be India's biggest defence deal and the country will operate 176 French origin combat jets.

IAF currently has 36 of them at Ambala and Hasimara air bases while the Indian Navy last year ordered 36 Rafale-Marine for its aircraft carriers.

The delivery of Rafale-M will begin by 2028.

Notwithstanding the DAC green flag, signing of a commercial pact with the manufacturer Dassault Aviation would take time.

▸ Rafales, Page 3A

Iran signals fast trials & executions as US threat looms

Death toll crosses 3,000; Arab countries pressuring Trump officials against military action

DUBAI, AGENCIES

Iran on Wednesday vowed fast-track trials for people arrested over a massive wave of protests, after US President Donald Trump threatened "very strong action" if the Islamic republic goes ahead with hangings.

Iran's judiciary chief Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei said on a visit to a prison holding protest detainees that "if a person burned someone, beheaded someone and set them on fire then we must do our work quickly", in comments broadcast by state television.

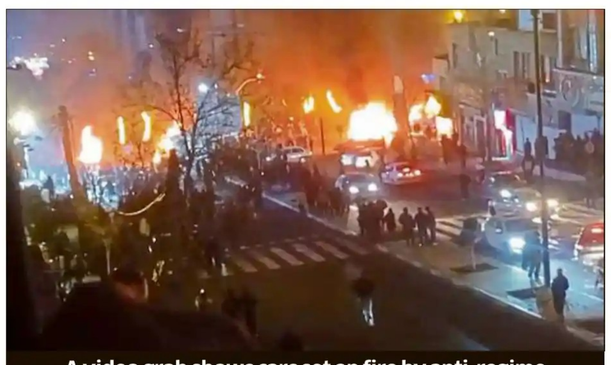
"If we want to do a job, we should do it now. If we want to do something, we have to do it quickly," he said. "If it becomes late, two months, three months later, it doesn't have the same effect. If we want to do something, we have to do that fast."

Iranian news agencies also quoted him as saying the trials should be held in public and said he had spent five hours in a prison in Tehran to examine the cases.

His comments stand as a direct challenge to Trump, who warned Iran on Tuesday about executions. "We will take very strong action," Trump said. "If they do such a thing, we will take very strong action."

"We don't want to see what's happening in Iran happen. And you know, if they want to have protests, that's one thing, when they start killing thousands of people, and now you're telling me about hanging — we'll see how that works out for them. It's not going to work out good," the US president had said.

▸ Iran, Page 3A
Iran only buying time, P9



A video grab shows cars set on fire by anti-regime protesters, in Tehran, Iran. AFP

What's latest in West Asia

- Norway-based Iran Human Rights puts the death toll in crackdown at 3,428
- More than 10,000 people arrested
- Saudi tells Iran that its airspace or territory won't be allowed for any attack
- Foreign entities potentially seeking to take advantage of instability
- Armed Kurdish separatist groups trying to cross border into Iran from Iraq

Indian nationals asked to leave Iran

NEW DELHI, DHNS: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi spoke over phone on Wednesday, even as India advised its nationals to leave the Persian Gulf nation, where a crackdown on protesters has led to the deaths of hundreds.

"Received a call from Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi. We discussed the evolving situation in and around Iran," Jaishankar posted on X, tagging Araghchi.

With protests spreading across Iran, New Delhi on Wednesday issued a new advisory for its citizens in Iran.

▸ EAM speaks, Page 3A

Embassy firm's project in Kadugodi 'forest'

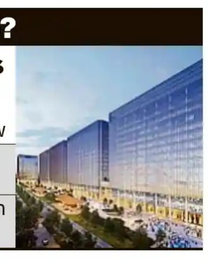
DH SPECIAL

CHIRANJEEVI KULKARNI
BENGALURU, DHNS

Four months after the Forest Department decided to file an appeal before the Supreme Court to reclaim 449 acres of forest in Kadugodi worth over Rs 22,000 crore, an Embassy Group company has begun work on an IT park on 78.54 acres of the land.

What's the Kadugodi fiasco?

- **711 acres** declared as plantation/ forest in 1896
- Land was leased for agriculture activities
- **300 acres** KIADB acquired, in violation of law
- Forest dept failed to produce facts before HC, lost ownership of land
- Forest minister in 2025 decided to appeal in SC
- Embassy began developing land



Documents available with *DH* show that over 711 acres in survey number 1 of Kadugodi Plantation was notified by the erstwhile Government of Mysore in 1896 and was declared a 'state forest' in 1901.

However, the forest department failed to secure the land save for the 120 acres which was reclaimed in June 2025. At the time, Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre had said the department would move the Supreme Court for reopening the case to reclaim the entire plantation. The minister had put the cost of the 120 acres at Rs 4,000 crore in June 2025. The current value is much higher.

▸ Kadugodi, Page 3A

Quickly

Cong man threatens woman official

KPCC coordinator Rajeev Gowda allegedly threatened Sidlaghatta CMC commissioner Amrutha G for removing promotional banners of a movie of Zaid Khan, son of Housing Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan, at Sidlaghatta Nehru Maidan. The audio clips of the incident have gone viral on social media, triggering outrage.
Details on Page 4

B'luru-Mumbai Duronto Express likely

The railways is planning to introduce a Duronto Express connecting Bengaluru and Mumbai in 18 hours, sources say. The proposal comes just weeks after the Railway Board approved a bi-weekly "superfast" between the two cities, covering 1,209 km in 24 hours, slower than the existing Udyan Express. The board notified the 16553/16554 SMVT Bengaluru-LTT Mumbai-SMVT Bengaluru service on December 9.
Details on Page 3

Joint session to discuss MGNREGA

A joint session of the legislature will begin on January 22, more than a month before the Budget session, the state Cabinet decided on Wednesday. The session will revolve around the Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission – VB–G RAM (G) – that replaced the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).
Details on Page 4

Bidar biker killed by manja while going to bring daughter home

BIDAR, DHNS: A bike rider died on the spot after his throat was slit by a sharp manja string of a kite at Talamadagi village, Chitaguppa taluk, in Bidar district on Wednesday.

Sanjukumar Hosamani

The deceased has been identified as Sanjukumar Gundappa Hosamani (48), who was travelling to Humnabad to bring home his daughter studying in a residential school for Sankranti holiday.

Eyewitnesses said the victim suddenly fell from his bike and died of heavy bleeding after coming into contact with the string.

The deceased is survived by his wife, son and three daughters.

Manja, a sharp, glass-coated thread commonly used to cut a rival kite's string, is banned in Karnataka.

Tahsildars in the district had issued orders against the use of manja thread ahead of the festival season.

The thread has caused numerous deaths and left many injured across the country.

Two deaths in Telangana, UP

Kite threads claimed one life each in Telangana and UP on Wednesday. In both cases the victims were riding motorbikes when their neck came in contact with the string. While the victim in Telangana was a farm labourer hailing from UP, the victim in the UP incident was a physiotherapist.
Details on Page 11

I-PAC raids: Cal HC disposes of TMC plea

KOLKATA, PTI: The Calcutta High Court on Wednesday disposed of the TMC's petition praying for protection of its data, saying the ED has informed that it has not seized anything from I-PAC director Pratik Jain's office and home during its raids last week.

Mamata Banerjee

TMC had moved the court seeking an order for preservation of personal and political data that may have been seized by the ED during its raids on these two premises on January 8.

Representing the ED, additional solicitor general S V Raju said the agency had not seized anything.
Details on Page 6

DETERRENCE EFFECT

'Street crimes down, murders stagnant in B'luru'

DH SPECIAL

PRAJWAL D'SOUZA
BENGALURU, DHNS

Street crimes declined significantly and the number of violent crimes like murder remained largely stable in Bengaluru in 2025 when compared with the two preceding years, which police believe will be a sustaining trend.

According to the city police data analysed by *DH*, in the last year, robbery cases declined by 47%, chain snatching by 53%, dacoity by 21% and motor vehicle thefts by 19%.

Murders remained more or less stagnant. In 2025, the city saw 191 murder cases, a marginal rise from 185 in 2024 and a slight decline from 217 in 2023. Investigators attribute the decline in street crimes to improved deterrence methods.

"Compared with earlier years, the Hoysala patrolling system is currently very strong. In the last three to four years, the crime data has been analysed systematically. The placement of Hoysala vehicles has undergone refinement and is placed close to hotspot areas based on time and nature of crime," C Vamsi Krishna, Joint Commissioner of Police (West Bengaluru), told *DH*.

▸ Street crimes, Page 3A
Rash, negligent driving cases surge 82% in Bengaluru in 2025, Page 3

Numbers signal trend in city crimes

	2023		2024		2025		% change (2024&25)
	Reported	Detected	Reported	Detected	Reported	Detected	
Dacoity	41	40	34	34	27	25	-21
Robbery	674	529	559	422	296	225	-47
Chain Snatching	160	142	154	131	73	57	-53
Murder	217	212	185	182	191	186	3
Vehicle theft	6,165	2,325	5,575	2,239	4,490	1,416	-19

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Investment fraud probe unmasks mule accounts ring; 12 arrested

Probe uncovers 9,000 accounts across India, online gambling

BENGALURU, DHNS

A probe by the Hulimavu police under the Electronics City division into an investment fraud case led to the discovery of a gang operating mule accounts.

The police have arrested 12 suspects in connection with the cyber offence and recovered assets worth Rs 1 crore. Police also recovered a cryptocurrency ledger.

"The investment fraud of Rs 24 crore has been discovered relating to our case," Bengaluru Police Commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh said on Wednesday.

The fraud is estimated at Rs 240 crore across 9,000 mule accounts identified in different parts of the country.

The probe began with an investment fraud case in which the victim believed he was investing with the promise of high returns, but the app that showed growing returns was fake. He lost Rs 3.03 crore.

The investigation led the police to two suspects who were opening bank accounts in the public's names and handing them over to the prime suspect in Dubai, who remains at large.

"This was done for illegal monetary gain and to assist in the operation of illegal gambling applications," the police said.

A case was registered and the police arrested two others, whose interrogation revealed they had deceived people in need of money by promising commissions and arranged for bank accounts to be opened in their names as mules. Further investigation led the police to arrest 10 suspects on December 17 at Rajendra Nagar, Delhi.

"As a result of the arrests, the police seized 242 debit cards, 58 mobile phones, 531 grams of gold ornaments, Rs 4,89,500 in cash, nine watches, 33 cheque books, 21 passbooks, seven laptops, one online digital payment ring, one cryptocurrency ledger and 48 SIM cards," the city police said.

The arrested are Mohammed Huzaifa, 22, from JP Nagar; Ankith Kumar Singh, 32, and Akash Jaisawal, 29, from Uttar Pradesh; Ajith Kumar Yadav, 29, from Bihar; Sathyamkumar Pandey, 27, from Jharkhand; and Abhishek Singh Rathod, 22, Vishwaraj Singh, 28, Kushal Singh, 26, Pradeep Singh, 30, Pitambar Singh, 30, and Ajay Kumar, 30, all from Rajasthan.

'Swamiji.com'

"Huzaifa created mule accounts, while Ankith and Ajith coordinated with the absconding mastermind. Sathyamkumar promoted 'Swamiji.com', an online gaming website used to launder money. The rest handled the mule accounts on the website," a police investigator said.

BWSSB deploys AI-based technology at pumping stations

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) has deployed AI-based smart pump monitoring and optimisation technology, 'IPUMPNET', across 78 pumping stations.

The new technology is expected to reduce energy consumption, generating annual savings of nearly Rs 40 crore.

Ram Prasath Manohar

"With this move, the BWSSB has become the first water supply utility in the world to adopt such advanced technology on this scale," said BWSSB Chairman Ram Prasath Manohar V.

'IPUMPNET' combines real-time sensors, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and predictive diagnostics, according to a BWSSB statement.

"Unlike traditional methods, this system continuously monitors pump performance and detects hidden losses. It has already identified pumps consuming power above the set limits.

"The board has begun replacing low-efficiency pumps with high-efficiency models," the statement said.

By preventing energy wastage, the BWSSB is ensuring financial savings and reducing carbon emissions.

"The BWSSB is committed to leveraging advanced technologies to enhance operations and improve service delivery for Bengaluru's citizens. 'IPUMPNET' gives us deeper scientific insight into our infrastructure, helping optimise energy use and ensure greater reliability in water supply. This initiative marks a transformative phase, setting a new benchmark for innovation in the water sector," Manohar added.

Months ahead of polls, GBA hopefuls hit the ground running

Senior leaders set sight on mayor's post as stakes rise

SNEHA RAMESH
BENGALURU, DHNS

Former corporators and aspirants for the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) elections have been active on the ground for nearly eight months, from participating in religious events and community festivals to distributing notebooks, calendars, and uniforms to schoolchildren and local families.

With the government announcing the reservation roster and the Supreme Court setting a June 30 deadline, election activity has intensified.

Many hopefuls are stepping up visibility, launching door-to-door campaigns, and using local events to build rapport with residents. Social media outreach is also on the rise, as candidates aim to connect with youth and first-time voters.

"Many former corporators have worked closely with people for five years. In the last eight months, new faces have increased their outreach," a senior BJP leader said.

Candidates are attending religious gatherings and cultural events to connect with voters. With many aspirants, proximity to people is essential to secure a ticket.

"We have three or four aspirants from each ward. We are speaking to all of them. Closeness to people is the primary criterion," said Abdul Wajid, Congress district president for Bengaluru North.

While the BJP and Congress have numerous aspirants, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) is still searching for suitable candidates. "We wanted to contest the 2015 elections, but could not do so. We have many who have worked on the ground since 2015, but in some wards, finalisation is pending. We will not give tickets to unworthy candidates," said Jagadeesh Sadam of AAP.

Bengaluru Navanirmana Party (BNP), contesting for the first time, has identified nearly 100 candidates.

Fresh faces

New parties like the Bengaluru NavaNirmana Party (BNP) and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) are seeking professionals, entrepreneurs and scientists to contest the GBA elections.

These parties are also working to engage residents' welfare associations and community leaders to broaden their local support.

With the number of wards nearly doubled, more fresh faces will contest.

"Many of our members have worked on the ground for a decade. We are also talking to advocates and scientists to contest," said Jagadeesh Sadam of AAP.

BNP representatives said none of their candidates have a political background. "Our candidates include professionals, entrepreneurs and activists who have worked closely with people. We will finalise names soon," said Srikanth Narasimhan, BNP founder.

Race heats up

While many new entrants aim to become corporators, seniors are now eyeing the mayor's post. With five corporations, there will be five mayors, increasing enthusiasm among experienced corporators.

"Now, the chance of becoming a mayor is higher. With more wards, more people will get an opportunity," said a senior Congress leader.

Rs 1-crore drugs seized; Nigerian among two held

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Central Crime Branch (CCB) has seized illicit drugs worth about Rs 1 crore and arrested two men, including a Nigerian national, in two separate cases.

The arrested are Uche Ndudi, 25, of Nigeria and Akash, a resident of Begur.

Police said that Ndudi was arrested based on information that a foreign national living near KR Puram was peddling banned drugs. Cocaine worth about Rs 50.6 lakh, a mobile phone and a two-wheeler allegedly used in the crime were seized from him.

In the second case, the CCB raided a house in AECS Layout near Electronics City and arrested Akash. Hydro ganja worth about Rs 48 lakh and other materials used for drug peddling were recovered from his possession, police said.

Techie, associate held for trading ivory carvings in Jigani

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Jigani police have seized two ivory carvings and registered a case for illegal wildlife trade, saying the operation took several days of surveillance and planning.

Two persons, including a software company employee, have been arrested, police said.

The arrested are Narendra Kumar Sharma, 48, from Uttar Pradesh and Sudhamanagar, and his associate Shabbir Ahmed, 50, a realtor from Banashankari.

A tip-off led the police to arrest the accused on Koppa-Beguru road as they arrived on a scooter to sell the carvings.

Police said the transaction was to take place in a secluded spot, away from the main road, to avoid detection.

The seized artefacts are over 120 years old and valued at Rs 25 lakh. Customers who came to buy the carvings escaped and are being traced.

During questioning, it was revealed that Ahmed, who is into the real estate business, had collected the carvings from an elderly woman, Sonal, to help her sell them for a high price. Police are still probing the original source and possible links to a wider network.

A police inspector probing the case said, "In Dakshina Kannada, we cracked several ivory smuggling cases, including one with the longest tusks from Sulya. The accused scoured forests for dead elephants and stole ivory.

"In places like Chamarajanagar, smugglers quoted prices up to Rs 1 crore, often passing off ivory as antiques. Now, awareness is higher; keeping ivory at home can lead to serious legal trouble."

The seized ivory carvings.

Shabbir Ahemed

Narendra Kumar Sharma

Ivory trade fuels elephant killings

A representative of Charlie's Animal Rescue Centre (CARE), an NGO, said, "Ivory trade directly fuels the killing of elephants and remains one of the most serious wildlife crimes in the country.

"The involvement of individuals from organised sectors shows how deeply wildlife trafficking has penetrated society.

"Such crimes pose a grave threat to biodiversity and ecosystems, and CARE strongly urges strict prosecution under the Wildlife Protection Act to deter future offences."

Revenue dept, BDA reclaimed over 400 acres in 6 months

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Revenue Department and the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) have recovered over 400 acres of land from encroachers in the last six months, data shows.

The value of the land recovered is pegged at Rs 3,756 crore.

This is, however, minuscule as the total extent of encroached revenue land in Bengaluru Urban district alone was 16,478 acres, as per data tabled in the Karnataka Legislative Council in July 2023.

The land recovered by the Bengaluru Urban district administration includes 38 acres in Bengaluru East, 61 acres in Anekal, 59 acres in Bengaluru South, 85 acres in Yelahanka and 99 acres in North Bengaluru.

This totals 343 acres worth over Rs 1,803 crore.

The total extent of land recovered by the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) is about 62 acres, worth over Rs 1,953 crore, as these sites are located in developed areas of the city.

Recovered land includes civic amenity sites, land marked for roads and unsold sites, among others.

While officials insist that recovery of land is a routine exercise, the eviction of families encroaching on public land in Kogilu and Thanisandra made headlines.

"Generally, the eviction drive is conducted following a favourable court order or when the land is earmarked for a project. There are instances where we have learnt about the encroachments only after citizens raised a complaint on social media," the engineer said.

The eviction drive in Kogilu and Thanisandra, however, drew criticism as affected residents alleged that authorities did not serve a notice in advance.

After decades, BDA transfers 8 layouts to GBA

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) has handed over eight layouts it developed decades ago to the municipal corporation under the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) on an "as-is where-is" basis.

With the transfer of eight layouts, a routine process, the BDA will remain responsible for only three layouts: Arkavathi, Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout, and Dr Shivaram Karanth Layout.

The long overdue decision will free the BDA from maintaining the layouts, allowing it to focus on forming new layouts and housing projects.

The Urban Development Department (UDD) order requires the BDA, Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), and municipal corporation officials to inspect these layouts to identify infrastructure gaps.

The UDD has directed the BDA to provide 50% of the amount if a layout lacks roads, parks and similar facilities. Where water supply and sanitary infrastructure is lacking, the BDA must bear 50% of the cost and the BWSSB the remainder.

The order also states that the BDA must transfer the khata issued to sites and houses in these layouts to the municipal corporations. Documents will include property tax arrears. Land under litigation will not be transferred to the GBA, the order adds.

Rowdy butchered in auto while heading home; five aides injured

BENGALURU, DHNS: Tension prevailed on Mangammanapalya Main Road in south Bengaluru on Monday night after a history-sheeter was hacked to death by a six-member gang.

Five of his associates were injured in the attack, which the police said stemmed from old enmity.

Police said the assailants, aware of the routine of Mohammed Shabbir (30), followed him as he was returning home in an autorickshaw with five associates.

Around 10.30 pm, they intercepted the vehicle at an intersection, threw chilli powder into the eyes of Shabbir and one of his associates, Mansoor, and attacked them with machetes and other lethal weapons.

When the others tried to intervene, they were assaulted indiscriminately. Shabbir sustained grievous injuries and collapsed at the spot. The attackers fled in an autorickshaw as people began to gather.

Shabbir was declared dead at a private hospital. His associates — Ateeq Khan, Mansoor, Salman, Waseem and Fayaz — were injured and are undergoing treatment at different hospitals. Their condition is stable, police said.

Police have identified the suspects as Noor, Nadeem, Salman, Ali, Ismail and Siddique, and detained two of them. A manhunt has been launched for the others.

Rowdy Monitoring Cell

A Central Crime Branch officer said surveillance of history-sheeters and habitual offenders has been intensified through a Rowdy Monitoring Cell, with emphasis on prevention, financial tracking and disruption of networks.

The city has been divided into zones, each headed by an ACP, for closer monitoring. The most active rowdies are under constant watch through interrogation reports, call detail analysis and, lawful interception.

MORE GREEN COVER

Lalbagh-like garden planned in south Bengaluru

BENGALURU, DHNS

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Wednesday said a Lalbagh-like garden will be developed in south Bengaluru, about 25 to 30 km from the iconic botanical garden.

Speaking at the inauguration of the 219th Republic Day Flower Show at Lalbagh, Shivakumar said the city needs more large green spaces as its population has grown from 11 lakh, when Lalbagh was established, to about 1.5 crore now.

"In the north, we are opening the Vishwaguru Basavanna Biological Park. In the south, we have Forest Department land about 25–30 km from Lalbagh, where we will develop another garden like Lalbagh," he said.

The theme of this year's flower show is 'Tejaswi Vismaya', honouring the late Kannada litterateur and naturalist KP Poornachandra Tejaswi.

Inside the historic Glass House, a green mountain with a waterfall and a statue has been created to reflect Tejaswi's love for nature.

His life and interests have been depicted through seven statues showing him as a writer, musician, painter, photographer, hunter, farmer-supporter and coffee enthusiast.

'Tejaswi Vismaya', this year's exhibition celebrates the life and work of late Kannada litterateur and naturalist KP Poornachandra Tejaswi, and will be open till January 26, from 7 am to 7 pm. DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

A separate floral display depicts his marriage to Rajeshwari Tejaswi, the first 'Mantra Mangalya' ceremony conducted by his father, poet Kuvempu.

His family shared photographs and key personal details with the Horticulture Department for the flower exhibition.

M Jagadeesh, Additional Director of Horticulture (Parks and Gardens), said several varieties of orchids and seven types of chrysanthemums have been used in the display, with all flowers sourced domestically.

Water sprayers have been installed inside the Glass House to keep the flowers fresh.

Bangalore Hospice Trust opens Advance Care Planning centre

BENGALURU, DHNS: Bangalore Hospice Trust, Karunashraya, in collaboration with the Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), has established the Karunashraya–MAHE Centre of Excellence for Advance Care Planning (ACP).

The centre will focus on advocacy, research and training in Advance Care Planning, with activities based at Karunashraya in Bengaluru and MAHE in Manipal.

Advance Care Planning is a structured, person-centered process that enables individuals to reflect on their values, express healthcare preferences, appoint surrogate decision makers and document future care choices.

According to Karunashraya, ACP helps ensure that medical decisions align with patients' wishes, strengthens communication among patients, families and healthcare teams, and supports dignified, goal-concordant care across the illness trajectory.

The centre aims to integrate Advance Care Planning into oncology, nephrology, critical care, geriatrics, palliative care and community health services.

As part of the initiative, Karunashraya will also launch a dedicated Advance Medical Directive (Living Will) Clinic. The clinic will operate every Saturday from 10 am to 12 noon.

Contact details

Those seeking further information or wishing to book an appointment may email advancedirective@karunashraya.org or call 080-42685666 or 9886036567.

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

Sankranti celebrations: Organised by Satya Sai Ashram; Sai Ramesh Hall, Ashram premises, Kadugodi; 9 am.

CULTURAL

Folk play festival: Organised by Natya Saraswati Shanthala Kannada Kala Sangha; BK Ravishankar, Dhananjay KH and others to participate; New Manjula Public School, Nelagadaranahalli; 1 pm.

Music performance: Sangeetha Balu, Samarth, Abhijit and others to perform; Nanjangud Raghavendra Swamy Mutt, Jayanagar; 5 pm.

Play: 'Hesare Illadavaru'; Directed by Rajaguru Hosakote; Organised by Rangapayana Trust; Kalagrama, Mallathalli; 7 pm.

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST

Mist

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	29.0°C
Minimum	17.0°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am)	--
Humidity (as of 5:30 pm)	65%
Sunset (Jan 15)	6:11 pm
Sunrise (Jan 16)	6:45 am
Moonrise	3:00 am
Moonset	2:30 pm

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

Rash, negligent driving cases surge 82% in Bengaluru in 2025

Fatal and non-fatal accidents continue to remain on par with 2024

SNEHA RAMESH
BENGALURU, DHNS

The number of cases booked for rash and negligent driving and driving in the wrong direction and such various sections under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) has increased by a whopping 82% in 2025 compared to 2024.

According to data accessed by *DH*, close to 6,872 such cases were booked in 2025, up from 3,774 in 2024.

The Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP) attributed the increase in cases to the increased enforcement and preventive measures taken by the police.

"Section 285 under BNS, we can book cases against those who are obstructing the flow of traffic. In many cases, people drive in the wrong direction and such instances are also considered to obstruct the flow of traffic. However, only when such acts cause heavy traffic pile up, a case is filed; otherwise, a challan is issued and a fine is collected," Karthik Reddy, Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic), told *DH*.

Rash and negligent driving

Apart from that, the police also file cases against those who drive rashly and negligently but do not cause bodily damage to people. Such acts could endanger lives and also cause traffic problems, the police said.

"We also conduct drives to identify footpath parking and footpath driving. While smaller two-wheeler drivers who park or drive on the footpath are left with a challan, those encroaching more of the footpath space and driving rashly, cases are filed against those endangering the lives of the pedestrians," yet another official said.

The data accessed by *DH* also showed that the city recorded 896 fatal accidents, a 3% decrease compared to 2024 and 4,228 non-fatal accidents, a 4% increase compared to 2024.

Increase in BTP jurisdiction

Reddy, however, attributed the rise in the non-fatal accidents to an increase in jurisdiction of the BTP.

"In August, three new traffic police stations were added to our limits. As a result, the jurisdiction of BTP increased by nearly 15%. Hence, the number of accidents also increased marginally. However, owing to the preventive measures, we have been able to keep accidents in check," Reddy said.

Number of cases under various sections of BNS

- 2024: 3,774
  2025: 6,872
- Non-fatal accidents
  2024: 4,097
  2025: 4,228
- Fatal accidents
  2024: 930
  2025: 896

Panel submits report on tightening security in prisons

BENGALURU, DHNS: A high-level committee headed by R Hitendra, Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order), submitted its report on prison reforms to Home Minister G Parameshwara on Wednesday.

Inspector General of Police Sandeep Patil, Superintendents of Police C B Rishyant and Amarnath Reddy, deputy commissioners and SPs of respective districts were also members of the committee.

The home minister said the committee's recommendations regarding the crackdown on illegal activities, security measures and reform initiatives in prisons, would be discussed with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, after which further action would be taken.

Committee members, headed by ADGP (L&O) R Hithendra, submit the report to Home Minister G Parameshwara (left) in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

On November 10, 2025, Parameshwara had announced that the committee would probe lapses in prisons after viral videos showed inmates lodged in the Bengaluru jail using mobile phones, drinking alcohol and partying. Among the inmates were convicted serial rapist and murderer Umesh Reddy, terror suspect Juhad Hameed Shakeel Manna and gold-smuggling suspect Tarun Konduru Raju.

The committee was tasked with inspecting prisons across the state and filing a comprehensive report.

The minister had pledged strong action, including dismissing or suspending officials, based on the committee report. The state cabinet also approved a Rs 2-crore project to install technical equipment, including baggage scanners, in prisons.

Bengaluru–Mumbai may get daily Duronto Express

Train expected to complete 12.k-km journey between the two Metros in 18 hours

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Railways is planning to introduce a Duronto Express connecting Bengaluru and Mumbai in 18 hours, sources say.

The proposal comes just weeks after the Railway Board approved a bi-weekly "superfast" between the two cities, covering the 1,209-km stretch in around 24 hours, slower than the existing Udyan Express.

The Railway Board had notified the service—16553/16554 SMVT Bengaluru-LTT Mumbai-SMVT Bengaluru—on December 9, 2025. Train number 16553 was scheduled to depart SMVT Bengaluru 8.35 pm on Saturdays and Tuesdays, and reach LTT Mumbai at 8.40 pm the next day. The return service, train 16554, was to leave LTT Mumbai at 11.15 pm on Sundays and Wednesdays, and arrive at SMVT Bengaluru at 10.30 pm the next day.

The service had 14 stoppages, including Hubballi and Pune, and was to run with 17 LHB coaches, with primary maintenance at SMVT Bengaluru. Although the South Western Railway (SWR) did not issue a formal notification, the new service drew widespread criticism over the long travel time.

Now, sources say the Railway Board is considering a Duronto Express between KSR Bengaluru and CSMT Mumbai via Tumakuru, Davangere, Hubballi, Belagavi, Miraj and Pune. Two rakes are proposed for the service, with primary maintenance at KSR Bengaluru. According to tentative timings, the train would leave KSR Bengaluru at 4.30 pm and reach CSMT Bengaluru at 10.30 am the next day. On the return leg, it would leave CSMT Mumbai at 3 pm and reach KSR Bengaluru at 9.30 am. However, Ashutosh Kumar Singh, Divisional Railway Manager, Bengaluru, told *DH* that there had been no official communication on the Duronto. He also clarified that the bi-weekly "superfast" service had not been cancelled and could be introduced later this month.

Prakash Mandoth, former member of the Zonal Railway Users' Consultative Committee, stressed the need for a "truly superfast" train that would cover the Bengaluru-Mumbai route in no more than 18 hours.

K N Krishna Prasad of the Karantaka Railway Vedike also called for a faster and more affordable train travel time. Duronto Express trains offer onboard meals included in the fare and have dynamic fares. A 3AC berth between KSR Bengaluru and CSMT Mumbai would cost approximately Rs 2,500.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Our Client intends to purchase a residential villa bearing No. 403, EPID No. 136400297, in Adarsh Palm Meadows II, consisting of Ground and First Floor, measuring 4671. Sq. Ft., constructed on Site No. 403, measuring on the East 82 Feet 10¼ inches, West 82 Feet 11½ inches, North 75 Feet 1 inch and South 76 Feet 9¼ inches, totally measuring 6292.37 Sq. Ft., carved out of converted Survey No. 3/1 and 3/2, situated in R. Narayanapura Village, K.R. Puram Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk, morefully described in the Schedule hereunder from its owners - (i) Mr. Sridhar Vaidyanathan and (ii) Mrs. Gita Sudha Sridhar. The Owner represents that they are the absolute owners of the Schedule Property and are free to enter into Agreement of Sale. They further represent that they have not conveyed or have not entered into any Agreement of Sale or any sort of understanding or arrangement with any other person(s) or third party(ies) for the sale of the Schedule Property. The Owners further represent that they have not mortgaged or encumbered the Schedule Property in any manner and that apart from the Owners, there are no other person(s), firm or company or banks or financial institutions have any sort of right, title or claim over the Schedule Property. Any person/s having objections or claims may, with documentary evidence lodge their objection/claim, within ten (10) days from the date of this Notice with the undersigned, failing which, our Client shall proceed with the above-mentioned transaction.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of the residential villa No. 403, EPID No. 136400297, in Adarsh Palm Meadows II, consisting of Ground and First Floor, measuring 4671. Sq. Ft., constructed on Site No. 403, measuring on the East 82 Feet 10¼ inches, West 82 Feet 11½ inches, North 75 Feet 1 inch and South 76 Feet 9¼ inches, totally measuring 6292.37 Sq. Ft., carved out of converted Survey No. 3/1 and 3/2, situated in R. Narayanapura Village, K.R. Puram Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk, and bounded on the : **East By :** House Property bearing No. 401 and 402. **West By:** Road. **North By :** House Property bearing No. 404. **South By :** House Property bearing No. 402.

Mr. Yashir Ali, Advocate, Juris Consult Advocates,
II Floor, Krishna Complex, 14, S.B.I. Road / Old Madras Bank Road,
Off. St. Marks' Road, Bangalore 560 001. M: 98454 01740

Government of Karnataka
Karnataka Examinations Authority

UG CET - 2026

Hon'ble Higher Education Minister and Chairman, KEA Dr. M.C. Sudhakar and
Hon'ble Medical Education, Skill Development Minister and KEA Co-Chairman Dr. Sharan Prakash Patil
released the CET Diksuchi 2026.

Dear students and parents

For admission to professional courses such as Engineering, Agriculture, Veterinary, Pharmacy, B.Sc. (Nursing), etc., candidates must submit an online application for CET-2026, which is conducted by KEA.

The CET-2026 application works as an "Application-cum-Verification" Module. Details related to a candidate's academic study and caste reservation will be automatically fetched through web services using the SATS and RD numbers.

Therefore, a "CET Diksuchi" information booklet, containing brief details about the application process, eligibility criteria, sample certificates, and other relevant information, will be provided to candidates in their respective colleges.

WHAT DOCUMENTS MAY BE REQUIRED TO APPLY?

MANDATORY DOCUMENTS FOR ALL CANDIDATES
- SSLC / 10TH CLASS MARK SHEET
- AADHAR CARD
- STUDENT'S PHOTOGRAPH (IN JPG FORMAT. < 50KB)
- STUDENT'S SIGNATURE (IN JPG FORMAT. < 50KB)
- STUDENT'S MOBILE NUMBER (WITH WHATSAPP) & EMAIL REGISTRATION

Special Note: The name in the SSLC mark card, Aadhar card and RD certificate should be the same. If there is any discrepancy, immediately correct the Aadhar card and RD certificate as per the SSLC mark card.

The following documents required, if applicable
(Certificates should be in the name of the candidate only)

Scheduled Caste candidates: Caste Certificate containing internal reservation details (Category-A / Category-B / Category-C) with RD number.	Kannada Medium study certificate from 1st to 10th standard
Caste certificate: For ST and Category-1 students with RD number.	Certificate for studying in rural areas of Karnataka from 1st to 10th standard
SC, ST, Category-1 candidates will have to obtain income certificate with RD number separately . 1. SC / ST candidates - Fee exemption if annual income upto Rs.10.00 Lakhs. 2. Category-1 candidates – Partial Fee exemption if annual income upto 2.5 Lakhs.	NCLC certificate with RD number (for General Category candidates seeking reservation for studies in rural areas) **For Medical and Dental courses** Linguistic Minority certificate: Studied in Karnataka for a period of Ten Years from 1st Standard to 2nd PUC/12th and passed SSLC/10th or 2nd PUC/12th from Karnataka state.(Tamil, Telugu, Kodava & Tulu mother tongue)
Caste / Caste Income Certificate (Income and Caste Certificate)– with RD Number (for 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B students)	Religious Minority Certificate (for Muslim, Christian Religious Minority Candidates)
371(J) Kalyana Karnataka Certificate with RD number	

H. Prasanna IAS
Executive Director, KEA.

@KEA_KARNATAKA | KEA Vikasana | keaugcet25@gmail.com | https://cetonline.karnataka.gov.in/kea/ | 080-23 460 460 (10 Lines - From 8.00 am to 8.00 pm)

Admission to Therapy UG courses through NEET now

BENGALURU, DHNS: For the academic year 2026-27, the admissions to Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy undergraduate programmes in the state will be through the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET).

Following a communication from the National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professionals, the Karnataka State Allied and Healthcare Council has issued directions to all public universities, private state universities and deemed-to-be universities to admit students based on their NEET score.

"The category-wise criteria for Allied and Healthcare programmes have been notified and communicated to the University Grants Commission (UGC) for adoption with effect from the academic year 2026-27," reads the circular.

It has been clearly notified that admissions to the Bachelor of Physiotherapy (BPT) category 1, Bachelor of Occupational Therapy (BOT) category 6 should be done through NEET.

Cyber slavery: 3 Belagavi youth rescued

BELAGAVI, DHNS: Three persons from the city, who had been forced into cyber slavery in Cambodia after being promised data entry jobs in Singapore, were rescued by the joint efforts of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

Family members of the victims had filed a plaint with the police against three conmen, who had cheated them on the pretext of providing jobs. The victims, Akash Vithal Kaganikar, a resident of Parvati Nagar, Udyambag, Omkar Sambhaji Lokhande and Sanskar Sambhaji Lokhande, residents of Honaga-Bennali village in Belagavi taluk, were brought back a few days ago.

Police said the accused Prasanna Hundre, Asif, both residents of Belagavi, and Amit, a native of Punjab, ran a fake job racket from Belagavi. They lured the gullible youth with data entry jobs in Singapore, promising them a salary of Rs 1.25 lakh per month and collected Rs 2.5 lakh from the youth. They took the trio to Cambodia and forced them into cyber slavery. The accused had trapped about 20 Indians from different places into cyber slavery. Sachin Kaganikar, a victim's brother, had filed a plaint with CEN police on December 25, last.

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Terms and conditions apply. Please contact your nearest dealership for details. Features, accessories, and specifications may vary by variant and are subject to change without prior notice. Images are for illustration purposes only. Offers and prices may differ by variant, model, location, and city, and are subject to change or withdrawal without notice. Offer values represent the maximum applicable benefits and include consumer, exchange, and institutional/fleet offers (where applicable) on select models/ variants. *The effective price for Brezza of ₹ 7.92 Lakh has been calculated after deducting the applicable consumer offer of ₹ 0, exchange/scrappage bonus of ₹ 25 000, and rural/ISL offer of ₹ 5 000 and Others ₹ 3 000 from the ex-showroom price of ₹ 8.25 Lakh. The actual Effective Price mentioned may vary based on the customer's eligibility, profile, and applicable offers at the time of purchase. Finance is at the sole discretion of the financier. Fuel efficiency is as per the test result of Rule 115 of Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989. Colors shown may vary from actual body colors due to printing on paper.
BREZZA

Iran signals fast trials...

Iran, from Page 1

One Arab Gulf diplomat told the AP that major Mideast governments had been discouraging the Trump administration from launching a war now with Iran, fearing "unprecedented consequences" for the region that could explode into a "full-blown war".

Iranian authorities called the American warnings a "pretext for military intervention".

Rights groups said Iranian security forces have killed at least 3,428 protesters in the crackdown. More than 10,000 people have also been arrested.

In a related development, the US military was evacuating an unspecified number of nonessential personnel from Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar as a precautionary measure while President Donald Trump weighed ordering military action in Iran.

Meanwhile, Revolutionary Guards' Aerospace Commander Majid Mousavi said on Wednesday that Iran's stockpile of missiles has increased since a 12-day war with Israel last year.

"We are at the peak of our readiness," Mousavi was quoted as saying by state media, adding that wartime damages had been repaired and output in various areas by the guards' aerospace forces was higher than before June 2025.

That figure dwarfs the death toll from any other round of protest or unrest in Iran in decades and recalls the chaos surrounding the country's 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Iranian prosecutors have said authorities would press capital charges of "waging war against God" on some detainees.

Meanwhile Wednesday, Iran held a mass funeral of some 100 security force members killed in the demonstrations after authorities earlier said it would be 300.

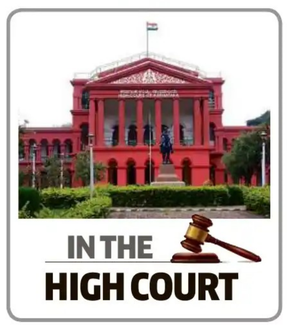
Tens of thousands of mourners attended, holding Iranian flags and photos of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

People elsewhere remained fearful in the streets. Plainclothes security forces still milled around some neighbourhoods, though anti-riot police and members of the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard's all-volunteer Basij force appeared to have been sent back to their barracks.

Ahmadreza Tavakoli, 36, said he witnessed one demonstration in Tehran and was shocked by the use of firearms by authorities. "People were out to express themselves and protest, but quickly it turned into a war zone," Tavakoli said. "The people do not have guns. Only the security forces have guns."

HC stays probe against Sri Sri Ravishankar in govt land grab case

BMTF had registered FIR against spiritual leader, 4 others



AMBARISH B
BENGALURU, DHNS

The High Court of Karnataka has stayed the investigation against spiritual leader Sri Sri Ravishankar in relation to a public land encroachment case registered by the Bangalore Metropolitan Task Force (BMTF) until the next date.

"..a perusal at the complaint would prima facie indicate no allegations against this petitioner. Without any allegations, the petitioner cannot be drawn into the web of crime, unless the Special Public Prosecutor would place on record something to indicate that the petitioner is directly involved in certain acts, on the next date of hearing. Therefore, the investigation qua the petitioner shall remain stayed, till the next date of hearing," Justice M Nagaprasanna said in the order, posting the matter to January 21.

Ravishankar challenged the crime registered against him for the offence under Section 192A of the Karnataka Land Revenue Act.

Advocate P Prasanna Kumar, appearing for the petitioner, submitted that while the FIR was registered pursuant to the orders passed by a division bench of the high court in a PIL petition, Ravishankar's name was shown as accused number – 1 with a "malafide intention".

The PIL had sought the court's direction to demolish apartments constructed encroaching on government land at Kaggalipura, Uttarahalli hobli, Bengaluru South taluk.

Disposing of the PIL on September 9, 2025, the high court had directed the state to take action against the encroachers in accordance with the law.

The petition stated that the state government had filed a memo in the PIL without mentioning the petitioner's name.

On September 19, 2025, the BMTF police inspector registered a suo motu FIR based on the report of the Bengaluru South tahsildar against Ravishankar and four others for encroaching on government land, a lake and a stormwater drain in survey numbers 160, 164/1, 164/2, 150, 137, 135 and 46 at Kaggalipura.

The petition stated that Ravishankar does not own any piece of land in these survey numbers in Kaggalipura. In the entire first information report, except naming as accused number 1, there is no whisper of any allegation that the petitioner has encroached on any of these lands nor there is an allegation that he is the owner of any of these lands, the petition said. It further stated that a police notice, issued against another accused in the FIR, indicates that the allegation of land grabbing in small bits is against accused numbers 2-5.

On the other hand, B A Belliappa, Special Public Prosecutor, submitted that Ravishankar's name did spring up as a respondent in the PIL, pursuant to which the crime was registered. He further submitted that no fault can be found with the BMTF in registering the crim,e as they have followed every procedure in law.

Defence ministry...

Rafales, from Page 1

The deal needs to be cleared by the Union Finance Ministry and finally by the Cabinet Committee of Security headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, sources said.

According to the proposal, some of the aircraft will come in a fly away condition while the rest will be manufactured in India in Dassault's manufacturing facility at Nagpur involving major Indian players.

Last year, Dassault Aviation partnered with Tata Advanced Systems to make Rafale fighter aircraft fuselage for India and other global markets.

TASL would produce key structural sections of the Rafale, including lateral shells of the rear fuselage, the complete rear section, the central fuselage and the front section in its Hyderabad facility.

The first fuselage sections are likely to roll off the assembly line in FY2028, with the facility planning to deliver up to two complete fuselages per month.

'Street crimes down, murders stagnant in B'luru'

Street crimes, From Page 1

"Based on the time, crime and location, the data is analysed over a period of time and the software will give us suggestions at the Command Centre. Patrolling vehicles are deployed in such a manner that the response time is kept as minimum as possible," he added.

A senior Bengaluru police officer said that improved CCTV coverage in the city, along with geotagging of all public-facing surveillance cameras for better access and coverage, has been acting as a deterrent, especially for street crimes. *DH* had reported previously that till May 2025, the city police had geotagged over 5.35 lakh cameras to the Mobile Crime and Criminal Tracking Network System (MCCTNS).

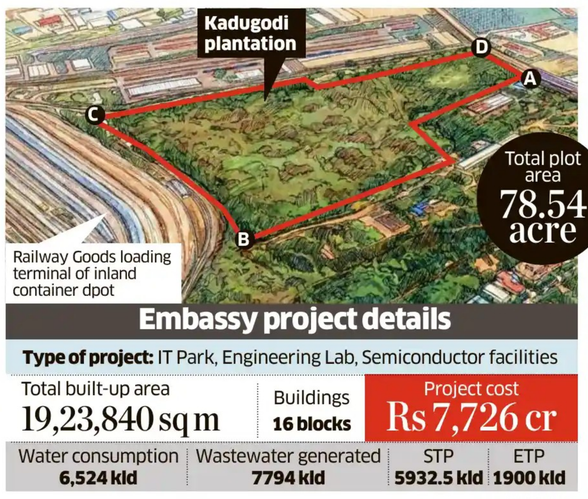
"This exercise is continuing as and when new CCTV cameras are installed in public spaces. Our analysis suggests that this, including the active Hoysala patrolling, has proven to be a key deterrent to street crimes, especially chain snatching and motor vehicle thefts," the officer said.

Concerning murders in the city, police officers said that violent murders originating from gang wars are more or less non-existent. Murder for gains and murders resulting from dacoity attempts have also declined, officers say. "However, murders arising out of passion, family and civil dispute, which are personal in nature, exist as they happen spontaneously. These cannot be generalised. The data shows that over a period of three or four years, the number of murders more or less remains the same. However, during the same period, the city's population would have definitely increased. This shows there is a declining trend in murders," another senior Bengaluru police officer, with expertise in homicide investigations, said.

Embassy firm's project in Kadugodi 'forest'

Kadugodi, from Page 1

In September 2025, the Bengaluru division office wrote to the conservator of forest highlighting the urgent need to file an appeal and secure the land. The letter called the land a 'forest' that needs to be saved.



Embassy gets land

However, in June 2025, the state-level expert appraisal committee issued terms of clearance to Embassy East Business Park Private Ltd to develop the township for a mixed-use development project. The 78.5 acres originally belonged to Concord India Pvt Ltd, which in 2020 became an Embassy Group subsidiary. The cost of the IT park and other mixed use of the project was estimated at Rs 7,726 crore last year.

Documents show that the State Environment Impact Assessment Authority had raised a query over the status of the land. "The proposed area appears to be inside the forest, please clarify, land documents and chronology of name changes...," it had said.

The company, which had dropped the word "private" in its name, replied on December 12, 2025, that the land was leased by Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB). Further, it said environment clearance has been secured as early as 2022. Documents show that the company had proposed to cut 253 trees and relocate 129 others in the proposed project area.

Dept in deep trouble

The forest department has been struggling with legacy problems. During World War II, the military took over 141 acres, while the remaining 572 acres were leased to a cooperative society for farming. In 1985, KIADB acquired 300 acres of this forest by paying Rs 30,000 per acre to the cooperative society, which had no rights to sell the land. Moreover, the acquisition violated the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

The Forest Department's efforts to recover the 449 acres and 28 guntas from companies that were allotted land by KIADB were dismissed by the high court on the ground that the original notification was not issued by the chief commissioner, as mandated by the Forest Rules 1878.

However, the post of chief commissioner ended on March 25, 1881, when the British handed over the government to Chamarajendra Wadiyar, who issued more than 228 notifications to protect plantations and forests. "This matter was not communicated to the court effectively. As a result, the high court ruled that the land is not forest," a source said.

In the Supreme Court, the government's petition explained the error that occurred in the high court but failed to challenge the order. In fact, Karnataka's appeal sought control over ownership of the 125 acres of forest and never mentioned the 449 acres. More importantly, the government did not seek the quashing of the HC order. In any case, the appeal was dismissed.

In June last year, following the reclamation of 120 acres, the DCF (B'luru Urban), wrote to the CCF to get a case filed.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

TENDER NOTICE No. 01/SBC/26 of 05.01.2026

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders for the following works.

Sl.	Name of the Work	Approx. Value
1	Bengaluru - Sampige Road section : **Sub Work-I :** Proposed construction of pedestrian subway at km 1/300-400, size 1x5.0x2.65m, by Air pushing method. **Sub Work-II** : Proposed construction of pedestrian subway at km 45/600-700, size 1x5.0x3.15m, by Air pushing method. Maintenance period is 6 months or one monsoon period whichever is later.	Rs. 9,58,53,668/-
2	Bengaluru - Sampige road sec : **Sub Work-I :** Proposed construction of pedestrian subway at km 12/900 -13/000, size 1x5.0x2.65m, by Launching method. **Sub Work-II :** Proposed construction of pedestrian subway at km 14/300-400, size 1x5.0x2.65m, by Launching method. Maintenance period is 6 months or one monsoon period whichever is later.	Rs. 7,12,98,739/-
3	Bengaluru - Sampige road sec : **Sub Work-I:** Proposed construction of Limited height subway at Km 63/600-700, Size: 1x5.0x3.15m by launching method. **Sub Work-II:** Proposed construction of pedestrian subway at KM 67/200-300 of size: 1x5.0x2.65m by Launching method. Maintenance period is 6 months or one monsoon period whichever is later.	Rs. 9,00,30,303/-
4	Sr. DEN/North/Bengaluru sec : Supply of ballast at Makkajippalli depot (Quantity = 18,100 cum) including leading and loading in connection with the works of (a) Complete Track Renewal (P) of existing 60kg rails on 60kg PSC of 1660 nos/KM with 60kg/90 UTS R-260 rails and 60kg wider base sleeper of 1660/km for a length of 5.5 Tkm from km 130/000-135/500 (DN) in SSE/PWAY/Penukonda section, (b) CTR(P) for a length of 0.6 kms from 0/000-0/600 at Penukonda yard Rd-1 (SSPN Line) and TTR (Primary) of Point Number 62A at Penukonda yard between km 0/180-0/240 (1 set) in SSE/PWAY/Penukonda sec, (c) TTR of existing curved switch, CMS crossing and PSC sleepers with 60kg TWS and 60kg weldable CMS crossing and 60kg PSC fan shaped layout - 1in12 Total 24 numbers, (d) TTR of existing curved switch, CMS crossing, PSC sleepers with 60kg TWS, 60kg weldable CMS crossing and 60kg PSC fan shaped layout - 38 numbers and 1in8.5 - 4 numbers, total 38 numbers in SSE/PWAY/Hindupur sec.	Rs. 1,80,64,886/-
5	Bengaluru Division: Manufacturing, supply and execution of Alumino Thermic welding of 52kg and 60kg including in-situ welding in DEN/East/Bengaluru and DEN/West/Bengaluru Section.	Rs. 1,71,78,617/-
6	Yelahanka - Bangarapet section : Providing an approach road on LH side in RUB 85A at km 96/200-300 between Chintamani - Srinivasapur stations. Maintenance period is 6 months or one monsoon period whichever is later.	Rs. 1,95,53,689/-
7	Bengaluru Division: **Sub Work-I:** Yelahanka - Bangarapet section: Proposed extension of RUB Bridge No. 75-A at Railway km 102.917 in Srinivasapur station yard (Exg 2 X 7.5m X 5.5m (Twin RCC Boxes), Proposed extension as 2 X 7.5m X 5.5m (Twin RCC Boxes) - 13m) in connection with the work of track machine siding. **Sub Work-II:** Construction of track machine siding of 250m length at Srinivasapur station in connection with the work of Construction of Track Machine siding for a length of 420m at 15 minor stations in Bengaluru Division.	Rs. 1,44,06,334/-
8	Bengaluru -Jolarpettai section: **Sub Work-I:** Proposed construction of 4 units of Type-II quarters at Malur. **Sub Work-II:** Proposed construction of Lobby at Running Room cellar at Sir M Visvesvaraya Terminal - Bengaluru station. **Sub Work-III:** Proposed construction of SM rest Rooms at Devangonthi, Malur, Bisanattam and Varadapura stations, including electrical portions. Maintenance period is 12 months. (Composite Tender)	Rs. 1,59,73,979/-
9	**Sub Work-I:** Assistant Divisional Engineer/Mandya Sub division: Proposed construction of Boundary wall at km 13/200-15/300 Up and 15/700-15/850 Up and Down for a total length of 2400 meter in SSE/Pway/Kengeri section. **Sub Work-II:** KSR Bengaluru: Proposed provision of women crew lounge in first floor of existing crew lobby at PF 1 and proposed LPS room at PF – 5, including electrical portions. Maintenance period is 6 months. (Composite Tender)	Rs. 2,74,95,763/-
10	Bengaluru - Mysuru section: Providing drainage arrangements at waterlogging RUBs vide RUB No. 549A at km 44/160-173 and 668B at km 93/559-568 in SSE/P.Way/Mandya section. Maintenance period is 4 months.	Rs. 1,03,36,476/-
11	Bengaluru - Sampige Road sec : proposed pedestrian subways to facilitate crossing of railway alignment by cattle, Pedestrians and smaller vehicles in various locations as RCC box size 1x5mx2.65m in connection with speed increase upto 130 kmph (Total number of subways = 11 nos) - Fabrication of RH girders. Maintenance period is 03 months	Rs. 1,03,34,149/-

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 15:00 Hrs on 30-01-2026**

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

PUB/815/AAS/PRB/SWR/2025-26 **Senior Divisional Engineer/Co-ordination, Bengaluru**

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National Council of Science Museums

Ministry of Culture Government of India

Block-GN, Sector-V, Bidhan Nagar
Kolkata-700 091

Advt. No. 02/2026

Applications for "NCSM : Dr. Saroj Ghose Chair"

National Council of Science Museums (NCSM), an autonomous scientific organization functioning under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India & having its 26 units across the Country, invites applications for "NCSM: Dr. Saroj Ghose Chair" constituted in his honour. Incumbent should be a person of national/international eminence who can guide and inspire establishment of science museums, research, consultations and also networks with Central & State Govts., Central & State PSUs, Autonomous Bodies, Corporates, Private Sector Organizations etc. For details, please visit NCSM's website: ncsm.gov.in. Last Date: **15.02.2026.**

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Course Timing- 10.00 AM to 01.00 PM
ऑनलाइन ONLINE
Course Date- 18,25 Jan & 1, 8 Feb 2026
Course Duration:4 Days
email Id: training@idemi.org www.idemi.org. Ph. (022) 24050301/2/3/4

Contents: Introduction to Supply Chain & Logistics, Role of AI in Supply Chain, Fundamentals of Artificial Intelligence, Big Data in Supply Chain, Demand Forecasting with AI, Inventory Optimization using AI, Procurement & Supplier Relationship Management, Production Planning & Scheduling, AI in Warehouse Management, Transportation & Logistics Optimization, Block chain & AI Integration, IoT & AI in Supply Chain Risk Management with AI, Sustainability in AI-driven Supply Chains, Customer Experience & Personalization, Decision Support Systems, Case Studies in AI Supply Chain, AI Tools & Platforms for Supply Chain, Ethical & Regulatory Considerations in Supply Chain, Future Trends & Career Opportunities in Supply Chain

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PUBLIC CAUTION NOTICE

This is to notify the public at large that Our Client, on account of the fraudulent and illegal acts committed by (i) Mrs. S. K. Sujayakantha and (ii) Mrs. K. S. Parimala with respect of the Suit Schedule Property mention hereinbelow, Our Client was forced to initiated two (2) proceedings i.e., Arbitration Application No.4 of 2025 & Arbitration Application No.5 of 2025 ("Arbitration Applications") before the II Additional District & Sessions Judge, Mysuru (Honourable Court') seeking for relief of Temporary Injunction. In the said Arbitration Applications, Our Client had also filed I.A. No.1 seeking for ex-parte ad-interim order of Temporary Injunction to that effect, pending adjudication of the aforesaid Arbitration Applications.

The Honorable Court, pursuant to considering the contentions urged in the aforesaid Arbitration Applications, documents adduced and the arguments submitted, in the was pleased to grant an ex-parte interim relief in the aforesaid two (2) cases vide its Orders dated 27-11-2025 as under "Respondent her agents, assignees, representatives, attorneys or any person claiming through or under her are restrained from alienating, transferring, conveying, dis osing, leasing, pledging, mortgaging, entering into any Joint Venture or Developmental Agreement, parting with possession or creating any third party rights in the Suit Schedule Property till the next date of hearing." ("Orders"). In view of the above said Orders of the Honourable Court, the Public are hereby cautioned that any person/s dealing with Suit Schedule Property or any part thereof by entering into any kind of arrangement/s or agreement/s or deed/s either registered or un- registered, in respect of the Suit Schedule Property is illegal, in violation of the above said Orders of the Honourable Court and such acts, apart from being void, would also attract legal consequences i.e., both civil and criminal. Any claims made by any person/s based on any illegal and/or void document/s would do so at his/her/their/its sole risk, cost and peril.

SUIT SCHEDULE PROPERTY All that piece and parcel of the lands bearing Block - 1 and 2, Old No.4/p71, New Block 64, measuring Ten (10) Acres excluding Kharab land forming part of Survey No.4, situated at Kurubarahally Village, Kasaba Hobli, Mysore Taluk, Mysore District and bounded on as under; East by : Road leading to Sokkahalli Village, West by : Land gifted to M.A.R.P. Employee in Survey No. 4, North by: Land gifted to Palace Employee in Survey No. 4 & South by: Remaining Land of the Owner in the Plot No.1& 2.

Sd/- S.T. Prashantha Kumar, Advocate,
M/s. Fox Mandal & Associates, #6/12, Gurappa Avenue, Craig Park Layout, Primrose Road, Ashok Nagar, Bengaluru - 560 025

High court order on Kadugodi plantation puts 9 lakh acres forest across districts in peril

BENGALURU, DHNS

The High Court of Karnataka's reasoning to reject the Forest Department's claim over Kadugodi plantation has threatened the status of over 9.01 acre forest spread across several districts.

"Going by the HC order, nearly 3.65 lakh hectares (9.01 lakh acres) forest will become a non-forest area," states the letter by the deputy conservator of forests, referring to 228 plantations issued by the Mysore government giving protection to forests across the state.

The high court had said that the 1896 notification for Kadugodi plantation was not admissible as it was issued by the Mysore government and not the chief commissioner of the Madras government (Presidency). However, the chief commissioner had handed over his powers to Diwan as early as 1881.

228 plantations

Some of the 228 plantations include critically sensitive areas like Kakanakote, Metikuppe, Moyar, Bandipur, Anechowkur, Viranahosahalli in Mysuru district; Bisle, Hagarekaval, Kabbinale, Kaginere and other plantations in Hassan; Kukwada Ubrani, Malandur, Chornyaadehalli, Gangavanasara, Hunsekatte and others in Shivamogga. Together with plantations in Bengaluru, Tumakuru, Kolar and Chikkamagaluru, the Maharaja's secretary issued notification for a total of 3,64,739.03 hectares (9.01 lakh acres).

Sources in the department said the government not only failed to present facts before the high court, but also filed a defective order in the Supreme Court.

A copy of the petition before the apex court shows that the government did not even question the high court order and never made claims for the 449 acres it lost. Instead, it sought to secure the remaining 125 acres of land.

S Jaishankar

EAM speaks to Iran FM; Indians asked to leave

EAM speaks, from Page 1

"In view of the evolving situation in Iran, Indian nationals who are currently in Iran (students, pilgrims, business persons and tourists) are advised to leave Iran by available means of transport, including commercial flights," the Embassy of India in Tehran stated in the advisory.

New Delhi also asked all Indian citizens and Persons of Indian Origin living in Iran to exercise due caution, avoid areas of protests or demonstrations, stay in contact with the embassy and monitor local media for any developments.

"All Indian nationals in Iran are requested to also have their travel and immigration documents, including passports and IDs, readily available with them. They are requested to contact the Indian Embassy for any assistance in this regard," the embassy stated in its advisory.

All Indian nationals, who are in Iran and who have not registered with the embassy have been advised to do so on. In case any Indian national is unable to register due to internet disruptions in Iran, their families in India are requested to do so, New Delhi's diplomatic mission in Tehran stated.

S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER

DRM/ENGG, South Eastern Railway, Chakradharpur acting for & on behalf of the President of India invites E-Tenders against Open Tender. Manual Offers are not allowed against these tenders, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. **Sl.No.**-1. **Tender Notice No.: CKP-EAST-25-26-52, Date: 13.01.2026. Name of work:** (i) Through Sleeper Renewal (P) of 41.217 Tkm by Track Renewal Train (TRT), Deep screening by BCM and T-28 and other miscellaneous works under the jurisdiction of Sr.DEN(East)/Chakradharpur in Chakradharpur Division. (ii) Through Sleeper Renewal (P) of 4.903 Tkm by Track Renewal Train (TRT), Deep screening by BCM and T-28 and other miscellaneous works between Tatanagar-Aonlajori 286.00-290.903 = 4.903Tkm. (iii) Through Sleeper Renewal (P) 11 Km between section Tatanagar-Aonlajori From Km 259-270 (by Track Renewal Train (TRT) and PQRS), Deep screening by BCM and T-28 and other miscellaneous works. **Tender Value:** ₹ 8,50,24,634.28. **EMD:** ₹ 5,75,100. **Date of Opening:** 04.02.2026. **Sl.No.**-2. **Tender Notice No.: CKP-WEST-25-26-37, Date: 13.01.2026. Name of work:** Execution of Zonal works under Diesel & Electrical Loco Shed C&W Office, sick line under SSE(Works)/II-Bondamunda for period ending upto 30.06.2027 (2nd Call). **Tender Value:** ₹ 1,38,00,000. **EMD:** ₹ 2,19,000. **Date of Opening:** 05.02.2026. **Cost of Tender form:** ₹ 0 (for Sl.No. 1 & 2). The tender can be viewed at website **http://www.ireps.gov.in**. The tenderer/bidders must have class-III Digital Signature Certificate & must be registered under on IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderer/bidder can participate on e-tendering. All relevant paper must be uploaded at the time of participating in e-tendering. **Note:** e-Tender Forms shall be issued free of cost to all tenderers. (Authority– Railway Board's letter no. 2020/CE-I/CT/3E/GCC/Policy dtd. 16.07.2020). **(PR-1062)**

CENTRAL RAILWAY

SOLAPUR DIVISION

SIGNALLING WORK

Tender Notice No SUR-N-T-2025-26-38. Date:-13.01.2026 DRM(S&T)'s Office, Central Railway, Solapur for and on behalf of President of India invites online e-tenders on Railway's e procurement website **www.ireps.gov.in** from the capable, reputed firms /Contractors for the following works :- **Name of work with its locality:** Signalling works in connection with CTR, TRR, TTR, TSR, TFTR, TBR and TWR related works in Solapur Division of Central Railway. **Approximate cost of the work:** ₹ 1,29,44,874.19/-. **Cost of the tender form:** Nil. **Earnest money to be deposited:** ₹ 2,14,700/-. **Complection period of the work:** 12 Months. **Date & Time of Closing of tender: 06.02.2026** after **15.30** hrs. The details are available in **ireps** website. Corrigendum/amendments if any will be uploaded only on above e-procurement website. Only online tenders will be accepted. Manual/postal/e-mail, FAX, by hand tenders will not be accepted. Bidders are requested to obtain Class III Digital Signature Certificate with company name and register the same with **www.ireps.gov.in.** The Payment of Earnest Money (EMD) will be accepted through net banking or payment gateway or in the form of Bank Guarantee and the original Bank Guarantee should be delivered in person to the official nominated as indicated in the tender document before closing date for submission of bids (i.e. excluding the last date of submission of bids) For further details please visit: **www.ireps.gov.in.**

DRM - S & T Branch
CR, Solapur

Akar/Sur-7

Unauthorized crossing of railway line is a punishable offense

Workers' union urges all Q-comm firms to withdraw 10-min deliveries

BENGALURU, DHNS: The United Food Delivery Partners' Union (UFDPU) has welcomed quick-commerce platform Blinkit's decision to withdraw 10-minute deliveries.

In a statement, UFDPU Secretary Krishna said the victory was a "direct outcome" of the nationwide strike called on December 25 and December 31, 2025, by the Indian Federation of App-Based Transport, the Telangana Gig and Platform Workers' Union, and the Karnataka App-Based Workers' Union.

The strike sought an end to arbitrary ID blocking, the scrapping of time-bound ultra-fast delivery models, and comprehensive social security for gig and platform workers.

The union said companies had attempted to sabotage the strike by offering inflated incentives — five to six times higher than normal — and, in several places, even deploying bouncers to intimidate workers and prevent collective action.

According to the union, the 10-minute delivery model endangered workers' lives, denied them dignity, and punished them without the right to explanation through arbitrary ID blocking.

It has urged all aggregators and app-based service providers to immediately abolish time-bound deliveries.

KIOCL gets 2 years to begin mining at Devadari

Virgin forest with 1 lakh trees to be hit by project

BENGALURU, DHNS

Green activists are urging the government to save the last remaining patches of greenery in Sandur's Devadari range. DH FILE PHOTO

The cash-strapped Kudremukh Iron Ore Mining Company (KIOCL), which was at the risk of losing its hold over 1,000 acres of forest, has managed to get its lease renewed for two more years, with activists expressing concern over impending destruction of a virgin forest.

The company received forest clearance (stage II) for 470.4 hectare (1,162.38 acre) land in Sandur's Devadari range and got the mining lease in January 2023.

However, the department could not commence the operations within the two-year deadline and got the lease extended for one year by the state government, to January 1, 2026.

As per the Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act 1957, failure to commence the project within the stipulated deadline would result in the lapse of the lease. However, a few months ahead of the expiry of the deadline, the KIOCL approached the Centre with the problem. The Ministry of Mines, which looked into the matter, stated that KIOCL was unable to commence production within the deadline "due to factors beyond its control".

The ministry said it was informed that the forest lease agreement was delayed, which eventually led to a high court of Karnataka. In an order dated November 27, 2025, the ministry invoked the sweeping overs it has under Section 20(A) of the Act to extend the deadline by two years, till January 1, 2028 to start producing iron and manganese from Devadari range.

Save greenery: activists

The ministry noted that the company has to comply with the Supreme Court directions and conditions pertaining to the Kudremukh mines.

Sandur-based activist Sreeshaila Aladahalli, however, expressed concern at the impending mining work.

"This is a project opposed by the Forest department at all levels because it involves felling of 99,000 trees in the virgin forest. We urge the government to save the last remaining patches of greenery. Avoiding further destruction is the best way to mitigate climate change," he added.

'Gender sensitivity yet to take roots in contemporary society'

Experts during panel discussion on 'Women's rights, right to education and employment', organised by Deccan Herald and Prajavani in association with Social Welfare Department, in Hubballi.

HUBBALLI, DHNS

CONSTITUTION IS LIGHT

Curated by

DH DECCAN HERALD | ಪ್ರಜಾವಾಣಿ

Gender equality is gradually prevailing in society as a result of the Constitution's commitment to democracy and justice, but gender sensitivity is yet to take roots, opened experts during a panel discussion on "Women's rights, the right to education and employment."

Deccan Herald and Prajavani in association with the Department of Social Justice had organised the panel discussion in Hubballi as part of "The Constitution is the Light" campaign.

Explaining laws meant for protection of women in the country, advocate Vishwanath Bichagatti said that women, whether farmers or professionals, are all subject to atrocities in all regions of the country. Dr B R Ambedkar played a pivotal role in drafting and advocating for the Hindu Code Bill that promotes social modernisation and women's rights, he said.

"It was the great imagination of Ambedkar to introduce laws that conferred rights on women. Gender sensitivity is very important among all generations, and it was reflected during the framing of the Constitution about seven decades ago. But still we are struggling to see gender sensitivity in our society," he noted.

Writer Sunanda Kadame said women and Dalits were exploited before independence in the country. After the Constitution came into force, women's rights were guaranteed. In the Constituent Assembly, there were 15 women members from all regions and communities, who played a crucial role in ensuring gender sensitivity, and Dr B R Ambedkar was a great supporter of women's rights, she said.

Scan and watch complete round table discussion

Another writer, Vinaya Vakkund, said the Constitution brought unity and equality in plural society. The Constitution has given rights and opportunities to women, from voting to employment in all sectors. "Still there is fear over women's protection. Crimes against women are increasing every year. Over 40,000 women are subject to women trafficking, atrocities, and exploitation every year."

Social activist Isabella Selvaraj Xavier explained about the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) and how it helps women who are not aware of the laws to protect them. She said NALSA provides all legal services, including advocates, free for needy women. The legal cell has been helping hundreds of women in domestic violence cases, and courts are very progressive in such cases, she noted.

Retired officer G B Goudappagol said despite wars and global economic fluctuations, the Indian economy is stable and progressive because of the strong Constitution. "But still crimes against women have not reduced across the country," he noted.

While discussing the right to education and employment, all experts opined that capitalism has increasingly hijacked right to education by turning learning into a profit-driven commodity rather than a public good accessible to all. The rising cost of education has widened social and economic inequalities, leaving large sections of society from learning opportunities.

Experts argued that this trend undermines the constitutional promise of equal opportunity and social justice. In this context, there is a growing demand for the nationalisation of the education sector to ensure universal, affordable, and equitable access.

An Initiative by:

SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT
For the Educational, Social & Economic Upliftment of Scheduled Castes

In Association with:

Govt steps in to help varsities fulfil commitments to retired staff

BENGALURU, DHNS: Taking cognisance of the struggles that state-run universities are facing in fulfilling their financial commitments to retired personnel, the Karnataka government has come to their rescue.

Following requests for financial assistance from various varsities, the state government has thus far disbursed funds to six of them.

However, the six universities have been told to use these funds exclusively for the payment of retirement benefits.

Funds have been disbursed to Karnatak University in Dharwad, Kuvempu University in Shivamogga, Mangalore University, Bangalore University, Gulbarga University and the University of Mysore (UoM).

"The government is releasing additional funds to help universities pay out retirement benefits," reads the order issued by the government. The order, besides directing varsities to submit utilisation certificates, clearly states that the universities are not to seek funds again in 2025-26.

Karnatak University and UoM have been provided Rs 25 crore each, while Rs 15 crore has been sanctioned to Gulbarga, Mangalore and Kuvempu varsities, while Bangalore University has received only Rs 5 crore.

Meanwhile, the government has called upon varsities to identify other means to generate revenue. Offering technical courses, renting out unused buildings are among the suggestions proffered by the government for raising funds.

Minister for Higher Education Dr M C Sudhakar had drawn attention to the plight of state-run universities during the Winter Session of the state legislature in Belagavi in December.

Sudhakar had attributed the problem to unscientific bifurcation or trifurcation of the varsities, which he said had plunged the parent universities in financial distress.

Govt's suggestions for fiscal discipline

* Take steps to issue digital marks cards to students
* Installation of solar panels
* Stop offering unpopular courses

Mangled remains of the car that collided with a KSRTC bus near Bharatipura on the outskirts of Thirthahalli town on Tuesday night.

Four die in car-bus collision

THIRTHAHALLI (SHIVAMOGGA DISTRICT), DHNS: Four people, including three children, died while three others sustained serious injuries in a head-on collision between a KSRTC bus and a car on NH 169 near Bharathipura lake on the outskirts of the town, on Tuesday night.

According to police, Fathimabi (70), Rihan (14), Jiyaan (12) and Rahil (9) of Menase village in Sringeri taluk of Chikkamagaluru, died on the spot. A total of seven people, all natives of Menase village, were returning home in a Swift DZire after attending a wedding in Channagiri. The mishap occurred when the car crashed into a Raichur-bound RTC bus.

The Thirthahalli police have registered a case against car driver Riyaz Ahmed and the bus driver.

Tarmac talk: Rahul asked us to continue good work, says DKS

Clarifies that no other message came out of meeting

BENGALURU, DHNS

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Wednesday said top Congress leader Rahul Gandhi asked him to ensure the government continued good work and clarified that there was no other "message" from their brief meeting in Mysuru.

Shivakumar had a brief one-on-one conversation with Rahul on the tarmac on Tuesday. Even Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had a quick one-on-one talk with Rahul.

"There was no message. We met him (Rahul Gandhi). He asked us to continue working in a good way. We'll work in a good way. We informed him about programmes that have been planned regarding MGNREGA in the state. We have also discussed BJP's politics in the state," Shivakumar told reporters.

Shivakumar declined to divulge more details. "I'm the state Congress president. He (Rahul) is the leader of the opposition (in Lok Sabha). He was earlier the AICC president. Can we discuss in public our meetings with him? You (media) are unnecessarily quoting someone off-the-record and creating confusion," he said.

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar speaks to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi at the Mysuru aiport on Tuesday.

Shivakumar said that he is visiting New Delhi on January 16. According to sources, Shivakumar is going to the national capital to attend a party meeting on the upcoming Assembly election in Assam where he has been appointed as an observer.

Cryptic post?

On Wednesday morning, Shivakumar tweeted, "Efforts may fail, but prayers won't." Coming a day after his conversation with Rahul, the post led to speculation that Shivakumar was referring to his chief ministerial ambition.

Shivakumar specified that the post merely quoted what he said at a recent event. "Recently, I went to the Udyami Vokkaliga Expo 2025 where I said that while sharing my experience. The same was tweeted," he said.

DK brothers meet Kharge

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar and his brother, former Bangalore Rural MP DK Suresh, met Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday.

Shivakumar and Suresh visited Kharge's Sadashivanagar residence for talks.

This was Shivakumar's second meeting with Kharge this week.

Joint legislature session to discuss MGNREGA repeal

BENGALURU, DHNS

A joint session of the legislature will begin on January 22, more than a month before the Budget session, the state Cabinet decided on Wednesday.

The session will revolve around the Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act (VB—G RAM G) - that replaced the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). The session is expected to be held from January 22 to 31.

Addressing reporters after the special Cabinet meeting, Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister H K Patil explained that the Cabinet had passed three resolutions.

"The joint session of the Assembly and Council will be held from January 22, and it was also decided to invite the Governor to address it. The Cabinet has authorised the chief minister to finalise the Governor's speech. There will be a special discussion and a decision will be taken on the VB —G RAM G Act to create awareness about its socio-economic impact amongst people."

Though the Cabinet wanted to convene a special session on the MGNREGA issue, Patil explained that the joint session was being convened due to procedural reasons.

"The Constitution makes it mandatory that the Governor should address the first session after an election or the first session at the start of each year. In view of this technical reason, we are advancing the session. Instead of a special session, it will be a joint session."

When a reporter said that there was a perception that taking a decision on the VB — G RAM (G) Act would be assuming a confrontational approach against the Union government, Patil said: "The government will take an adequate step to protect the interests of the people and the state."

According to sources, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department Secretary Sameer Shukla gave a powerpoint presentation on the differences between VB—G RAM G and MGNREGA in the Cabinet.

Ashoka seeks special session

Leader of the Opposition R Ashoka wrote to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday and urged him to call a special session of the legislature in January to discuss the Malayalam Language Bill, 2025, "drug menace" in the state, the issue of "illegal immigrants from Bangladesh" inhabiting the state and the "collapsing" law and order situation in the state.

Congress leader threatens govt official over film banner removal

Audio clips of alleged threats go viral on social media

CHIKKABALLAPUR , DHNS

Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) coordinator Rajeev Gowda has allegedly threatened Shidlaghatta City Municipality Council (CMC) Commissioner G Amrutha Gowda over the removal of flex banners promoting the Kannada film *Cult*, starring Zaid Khan, son of Housing Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan.

Audio clips of the alleged threats given over the phone have gone viral on social media, triggering widespread outrage from government officials.

The incident allegedly took place on Tuesday evening, when a promotional event for *Cult* was held at Nehru Maidan in Shidlaghatta. Flex banners were reportedly installed across the road at Kote Circle, obstructing traffic.

Rajeev Gowda

Amrutha Gowda

Following complaints from the public, the municipal staff removed the banners and brought them to the CMC office. The commissioner is said to have informed Apsar, a former municipal president and a supporter of Rajeev Gowda, about the action.

Enraged by the removal, Rajeev Gowda allegedly called the commissioner and engaged in a heated argument, threatening to set the town on fire and using abusive language. In the audio clips, he is purportedly heard saying, "You have seen my good side, not my bad side," and issuing further threats.

The commissioner reportedly responded that the banners were erected without permission, posed a safety risk, and had drawn public complaints. This allegedly further provoked Gowda, who is also accused of hurling abuses at JD(S) MLA B N Ravikumar.

Officials and staff of the city municipal council stage a protest against Congress functionary Rajeev Gowda in Chikkaballapur on Wednesday. DH PHOTO

Rajeev Gowda unsuccessfully contested the 2023 Assembly elections from the Shidlaghatta constituency as a Congress candidate. His wife is the Shidlaghatta Block Congress president.

On Wednesday, the officials and staff of local bodies in Chintamani, Gowribidanur and Chikkaballapur staged protests seeking legal action against Rajeev Gowda. JD(S) MLA from Shidlaghatta, B N Ravikumar, also criticised the Congress functionary's behaviour.

Amrutha Gowda filed a complaint against Rajeev Gowda with the police.

Public apology

As the removal of flex banners took apolitical turn, Rajeev Gowda publicly apologised to the commissioner. "On hearing about the removal of the flex, I lost my temper and spoke impulsively in that manner. I was at fault. She is like my sister. I sincerely and publicly apologise to her," he said.

Breaks in tears

Expressing her anguish, Amrutha Gowda broke down in tears.

"I was a software engineer earlier. But I left that job and joined government service with the intention of serving the people. We seek at least basic respect. It hurts when municipal workers are spoken about in a derogatory manner. Being subjected to such abuse is deeply painful," she said.

Act against Cong functionary who abused officer, HDK urges CS

BENGALURU, DHNS: Union Minister for Steel and Heavy Industries H D Kumaraswamy on Wednesday called Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh, asking her to initiate action against a Congress functionary who allegedly abused and threatened the lady commissioner of Shidlaghatta City Municipal Council.

An audio clip of the exchange between Rajiv Gowda and Commissioner Amrutha Gowda has gone viral on social media. In the clip, Rajiv, upset over the removal of a banner, is heard abusing Amrutha, besides threatening her.

Kumaraswamy reportedly expressed concern over the lack of safety for women officers, besides demanding the Rajiv Gowda's arrest.

"Being a woman, you (Shalini Rajneesh) should not condone such behaviour towards lady officers. Action must be initiated against the Congress functionary who threatened the officer," Kumaraswamy is learnt to have told the Chief Secretary.

He also asked Shalini to take steps to ensure safety of women officers. Expressing dismay over such incidents recurring in the state, Kumaraswamy said, "You must ensure safety of woman officers under you."

Bagalkot girl dies of rabies two weeks after street dog bit her

BAGALKOT, DHNS: A 10-year-old girl from Bagalkot, who was grievously injured in a stray dog attack on December 29, failed to respond to treatment and died at KMCRI in Hubballi on Wednesday.

Alyna Lokapur

Alyna Lokapur, a resident of Sector number 15 in Navanagar, Bagalkot, sustained injuries in her eyes, nose and cheeks when a stray dog attacked her while she was playing in front of her house.

She was rushed to the district hospital. The doctors there referred her to KMCRI Hubballi after administering the first aid.

Alyna, a Class 4 student, however, failed to respond to treatment and succumbed to her injuries on Wednesday.

Alyna's father Rajasab Lokapur blamed the official apathy in addressing the dog menace for the death The residents of Bagalkot have expressed their anguish against the local authorities for failing to take measures to curb street dog menace.

Deputy Commissioner Sangappa told *DH* that the local body would provide a compensation of Rs 5 lakh to the family of the deceased girl.

In Chikkodi, Belagavi district, two-year-old boy, Ruthwik Anand Kudure, has suffered severe bite wounds after a pack of street dogs attacked him near his house at Venkatesh Galli, on Wednesday. The boy, who had suffered injuries in his face, is said to be recovering at a local hospital.

The incident has created panic among the residents and the parents of anganwadi-going kids.

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Bengaluru

Lifetime achievement awards presented to two senior scientists

BENGALURU, DHNS: Two renowned senior scientists were presented the 'Lifetime Achievement Awards', instituted by the Karnataka Science and Technology Academy (KSTA), on Tuesday.

Minister for Minor Irrigation, Science and Technology N S Boseraju conferred the Prof CNR Rao – KSTA Lifetime Achievement Award to Dr Ramakrishna, a renowned scientist and former director of the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), in recognition of his immense contribution to the field of science and technology.

The minister also conferred the KSTA Lifetime Achievement Award in Science Communication in Kannada to Sreemathi Hariprasad, a former scientist at CFTRI, for her exceptional service in popularising Science, Technology, Engineering, Agriculture, and Medicine (STEAM) in the Kannada language.

"Our government is committed to the comprehensive development of the Science and Technology sector in the state. By providing further necessary support to the KSTA in the coming days, we will shape it into a model institution for the entire country," Boseraju said.

"Cultivating a scientific temper and rational thinking among students and the youth is the urgent need of the hour. Research and innovations should not be limited to laboratories; their benefits must reach the last person in society," he added.

KSTA confers the 'Fellow of KSTA' honour to recognise the contributions of academicians, researchers, engineers, and technologists from academic institutions and industries across various fields of science and technology. "For 2023, a total of 33 achievers were selected for this honour and were felicitated during the occasion," KSTA said in a release.

The three-chariot Rathotsava was held on Wednesday on the Rathabeedi of Sri Krishna Mutt, Udupi, as part of Makara Sankranti celebrations, under the aegis of the Paryaya Puttige Math. DH PHOTO/UMESH MARPALLI

Udupi gears up for Paryaya

UDUPI, DHNS

The temple town of Udupi is fully geared for Shiroor Mutt Paryaya Mahotsava for the 2026–28 period, said MLA Yashpal Suvarna.

Addressing the media, he stated that elaborate arrangements have been made to ensure that the historic religious event is conducted in a grand and memorable manner, reflecting Udupi's rich spiritual and cultural heritage. The ceremonial entry of Sri Vedavardhana Sripada of Shiroor Mutt into Udupi was held with unprecedented splendour, marking the beginning of the Paryaya celebrations. From January 10, the traditional Hasiru Horekanike has been flowing into the Mutt, and this will continue until January 17.

This year, the offerings are expected to create a record, with foodgrains and materials sufficient to serve three to four lakh devotees through 'Annasantarpane'. Thousands of devotees are participating daily, while cultural programmes are being organised continuously, he said.

Highlighting the city's beautification efforts, the MLA said the Udupi City Municipal Council has sanctioned Rs 50 lakh for illumination of the roads as part of the Paryaya Mahotsava. "Under my leadership, the illumination works have been taken up on priority, and most of the decorations have already been completed. The formal inauguration of the lighting will be held on January 15 at 7 pm, near the Canara Bank opposite the court complex," he said.

Suvarna also informed that a grand 'Sri Parashurama Welcome Arch' will be constructed at the northern entrance of Udupi near the National Highway Junction. The foundation stone laying ceremony will be held on January 16 along with traditional rituals, under the aegis of the Paryaya Reception Committee.

German Chancellor's visit was entirely private: M B Patil

BENGALURU, DHNS: Industries Minister M B Patil said on Wednesday that German Chancellor Friedrich Merz's visit to Bengaluru was "entirely a private, pre-scheduled programme" without any official talks with the state government.

Patil was reacting to criticism from the Opposition BJP that neither Chief Minister Siddaramaiah nor his deputy D K Shivakumar received Merz upon his arrival in the city on Tuesday. The BJP charged that Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar preferred receiving Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in Mysuru.

It was Patil, who received Merz, at the Kempegowda International Airport.

In a statement, Patil said Merz's visit was "limited to" engagements at Bosch and the Indian Institute of Science.

"In such a situation, the question of the chief minister or ministers formally receiving him does not arise. Had there been any government-level engagements, the chief minister himself would have led the reception," Patil said.

"Nevertheless, as instructed by the chief minister, and in keeping with protocol and the dignity of Karnataka, a formal welcome and see-off were extended," he said.

"BJP's attempt to politicise even a private visit of an international dignitary is petty and irresponsible," Patil said.

Home Minister G Parameshwara put the onus on the union government.

"When the head of a state is visiting, we should get an opportunity to extend the necessary courtesies. The Centre should have informed us," he said, adding that Patil was the minister-in-waiting.

"Also, nobody from the state government had any invitation (for Merz's engagements). Even the local press wasn't invited," he said.

One more held for assault on migrant worker in Mangaluru

MANGALURU, DHNS: The Kavoor Police have arrested one more person in connection with the assault on a migrant labourer from Jharkhand.

City Police Commissioner Sudheer Kumar Reddy said the arrested was Mohan (37), a resident of Kuloor.

With this, the total number of people arrested in connection with the case has risen to four. Following the assault on Diljan Ansari on Sunday evening, the Kavoor Police had booked a case under sections 126, 352, 351(3), 353, 109, 118(1), r/w 3(5) of the BNS.

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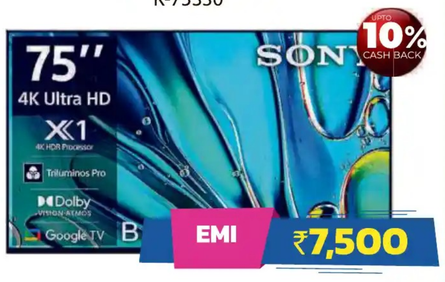
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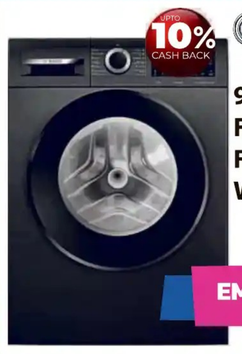
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Senior cop Rakesh Aggarwal named NIA chief

NEW DELHI, PTI: Counter-terrorism expert Rakesh Aggarwal was on Wednesday appointed as the new director general of the National Investigation Agency.

Aggarwal, a 1994-batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of Himachal Pradesh cadre, is currently working as special director general in the anti-terror agency. He was also holding the additional charge of the post of DG, NIA, after the premature repatriation of Sadanand Vasant Date to Maharashtra last month.

Date took over as the chief of Maharashtra Police on January 3. Following his repatriation, Aggarwal was named interim NIA chief.

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved Aggarwal's appointment as DG, NIA for a tenure up to August 31, 2028, the date of his superannuation, an order issued by the Personnel Ministry said.

Aggarwal is considered an expert in counter-terrorism, terror financing and radicalisation matters. He is regarded as an ace investigator, adept at handling probes in complex internal security cases. He has also extensively worked with the CBI and held key posts under the central and Himachal Pradesh governments.

I-PAC raids: ED denies seizing any data, says Didi took away all records

HC disposes of Trinamool's petition; adjourns ED's plea

KOLKATA, PTI

The Calcutta High Court on Wednesday disposed of the Trinamool Congress' petition praying for protection of its data after the ED informed it that nothing was seized from I-PAC director Pratik Jain's office and home during its raids last week.

The TMC had moved the court seeking an order for preservation of personal and political data that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) may have seized during its raids on these two premises on January 8.

Representing the central agency, Additional Solicitor General SV Raju submitted that the agency had not seized anything from these two sites and that Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who had visited these premises during the raids, took all the digital devices and records from there.

In view of the submissions made by the ED, nothing further remained to be dealt with in the matter, Justice Suvra Ghosh said and disposed of the TMC petition.

The court also adjourned a separate petition filed by the ED seeking a CBI probe into the events of January 8, when Banerjee visited the firm's office and its director's residence during the raids.

The high court adjourned the central agency's plea after the ASG stated that it had filed two petitions before the Supreme Court with prayers, which are almost identical to the present application before it. Raju argued that when a similar issue is pending before the apex court, the HC should refrain from hearing a matter on the same subject.

The SC is slated to hear on Thursday the ED's plea, alleging interference and obstruction by the West Bengal government, including by Banerjee, in its probe and search operation at the I-PAC office and the premises of its director in connection with an alleged coal-pilferage scam.

During Wednesday's hearing, TMC's counsel Menaka Guruswamy submitted that political parties have a right to privacy, as upheld by a Constitution Bench of the SC.

The hearing on Wednesday was held with restricted courtroom entry, allowing only lawyers connected with the cases. The direction to hold the hearings with regulated entry was given by Acting Chief Justice Sujoy Paul on Tuesday in view of unmanageable chaos inside the courtroom of Justice Ghosh on January 9.

Justice Ghosh had adjourned the hearing till January 14, and left her chair after repeated requests to those not connected with the petitions to leave the courtroom fell on deaf ears.

Raju also submitted that the TMC's petition seeking return or preservation of data which may have been seized is not maintainable unless CM Mamata is made a respondent in it.

Massive embarrassment for Mamata: BJP

The BJP on Wednesday described as "massive embarrassment" for West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee the Calcutta High Court decision to dispose of TMC's petition praying for protection of its data that may have been seized by the ED from I-PAC director Pratik Jain's office and home during its raids last week.

The "corruption" of the Trinamool Congress (TMC) and its "corrupt link" with the private company will "soon" be exposed, the BJP said, asserting that constitutional authorities cannot be intimidated by political theatrics and the high court has made that amply clear.

SC to hear agency plea for CBI probe

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on Thursday a plea by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) seeking a CBI investigation against West Bengal Chief Minister and senior state police officials for allegedly interfering in a money laundering probe and "illegally" stopping search operations at a political consultancy firm in Kolkata.

According to the Supreme Court's cause list, a bench of Justices Prashant Kumar Mishra and Vipul M Pancholi will take up the matter on January 15.

The West Bengal government has also filed a caveat in the apex court, requesting that no order be passed without hearing its side in connection with the ED raids on political consultancy firm I-PAC last week.

In its plea, the central agency contended, "The chief minister of West Bengal has made a pattern to take law into her hands and misuse the state police whenever any crime is investigated which is not of her liking or which has the potential of some incriminating material against her, her ministers, her party workers or few officials working in cahoots is likely to be found."

Claiming that the matter revealed a "shocking state of affairs", the agency said it was compelled to approach the apex court in view of extraordinary circumstances.

The ED said that the situation in West Bengal was serious, alleging that CM Mamata Banerjee, along with senior police officials, including the DGP and the Kolkata Police Commissioner, were involved in cognisable offences that require registration of an FIR, as mandated by the Supreme Court's Lalita Kumari vs Government of UP (2014) judgment.

The agency sought a CBI probe against the CM, the DGP and the Kolkata Police Commissioner, claiming they obstructed a lawful money laundering investigation.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri with Vice Minister of the International Department of the Communist Party of China Sun Haiyan. PTI

Kashmiri separatist, 2 others convicted in UAPA case

NEW DELHI, PTI: A special court here on Wednesday convicted Kashmiri separatist Asiya Andrabi and two others for offences including conspiracy to wage war against the country and being members of a terrorist organisation under the stringent UAPA.

Andrabi, the founder of the all-women separatist group Dukhtaraan-e-Millat (DeM) in 1987, was arrested in April 2018, and charges were framed against her under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) for allegedly conspiring to commit terrorist acts, being a member of a terrorist organisation, and providing support to such groups.

On Wednesday, the special judge found them guilty of offences under UAPA sections 18 (punishment for conspiracy) and 38 (offence relating to membership of a terrorist organisation).

The court has listed the case on January 17 for hearing arguments on the quantum of sentence.

NEET-PG cutoffs lowered to fill over 18k vacant seats

Students with negative scores to become eligible

KALYAN RAY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Five months after the results of NEET-PG were announced, more than 18,000 postgraduate medical seats remain vacant, forcing the National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences (NBEMS) to lower the qualifying norms further and allowing a section of students with negative cutoff scores become eligible.

According to the NBEMS notification, the eligibility cutoff score for students from SC/ST/OBC category is -40 out of 800, while the same for general students is 103. For students with disabilities, the cutoff mark is 90.

The NBEMS notification has triggered a controversy, with a section of doctors being critical of the testing body.

Two associations, the Federation of All India Medical Association (FAIMA) and Federation of Resident Doctors Association (FORDA) on Wednesday wrote to the Union Health Minister J P Nadda seeking to withdraw the notification and "restore a reasonable, merit-based cutoff in the larger interest of patients, medical education, and public trust".

Sources told *DH* the eligibility criteria for reserved category students had negative marks in the last two years too.

India has 1,23,700 MBBS and 76,174 seats for the 2025-26 academic season. Since the number of PG seats are less, a merit list is prepared on the basis of NEET-PG score.

"NEET-PG is a competitive entrance test to build up a merit list since the number of seats is much lower than the number of aspirants. Here, we are not changing the scores of the students and the biggest reason for the negative score is due to the structure of the examination with negative marking for wrong answers," sources said.

REVISED NORMS

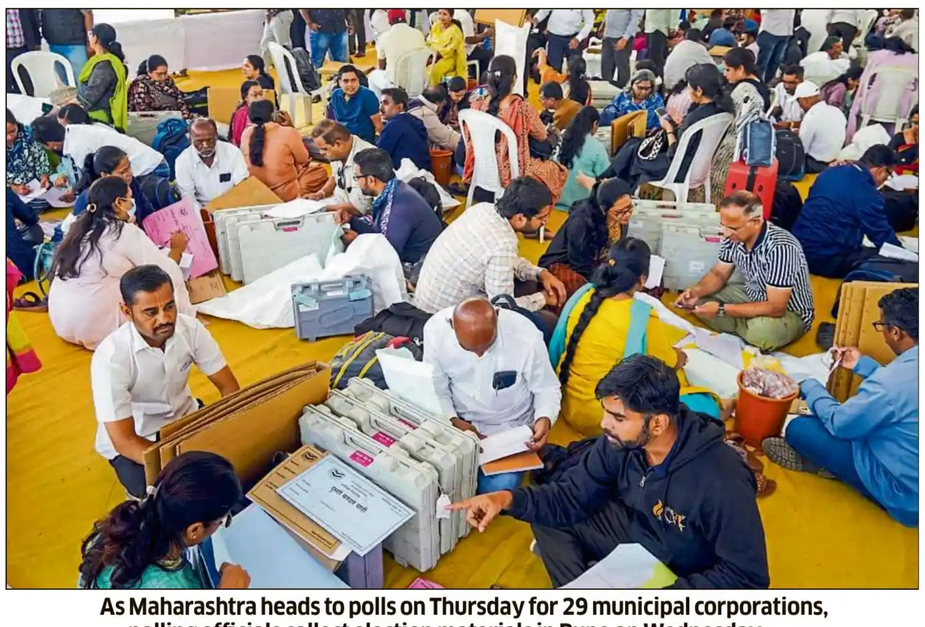
- Cutoff score for SC/ST/OBC students is -40 out of 800, while the same for general students is 103.
- For students with disabilities, the cutoff mark is 90
- The revision, according to sources, aims to ensure optimal utilisation of available seats
- NBEMS notification triggers controversy; associations seek its withdrawal

High fees

Asked about the vacancies in the PG seats, Rohan Krishnan, chief patrol of FAIMA, said exorbitant fees charged by private medical colleges and poor training standards in many were the key contributing factors behind the vacancy.

"In several private medical colleges, the fee for a single PG seat runs into crores, making it unaffordable even for meritorious candidates. Students are avoiding institutions where training quality is poor, but financial burden is crushing," Krishnan said.

ELECTION-READY



As Maharashtra heads to polls on Thursday for 29 municipal corporations, polling officials collect election materials in Pune on Wednesday. PTI

Modi to launch TN campaign with NDA allies on Jan 23

E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch his campaign for the Tamil Nadu Assembly polls on January 23 by addressing a public rally near Chennai, along with leaders from NDA constituents.

While the PMK joined the alliance last week, the AIADMK and BJP are working to bring parties like the DMDK and TTV Dhinakaran's AMMK into the fold before the prime minister's visit.

This will also mark the first time when NDA leaders share the dais after the AIADMK and BJP revived their ties in April 2025.

By making Modi share the stage with all leaders of the NDA, the AIADMK and BJP aim to send a message that they are "united" at a time when the DMK-led Secular Progressive Alliance (SPA) seems to have hit turbulence, with the Congress speaking in different voices.

While the AIADMK is confident of bringing the DMDK into the NDA fold, the BJP is still working to persuade TTV Dhinakaran, who holds considerable influence among the Mukulathors, to join the alliance by softening his earlier stance of not accepting AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami as the chief ministerial candidate.

"We are in talks with TTV to join the NDA. He is double-minded as he wants to go with actor Vijay's TVK. We are explaining to him that his presence will be a boost for the alliance. He has no objection to doing business with the BJP; his only issue is the AIADMK and EPS. We believe he will soon realise that the DMK is his enemy as well," a source told *DH*.

The source added that the BJP leadership is also contemplating how to accommodate O Panneerselvam (OPS), another AIADMK rebel, within the NDA. "We don't want to give the impression that we have ditched OPS, who has been with us for a long time," the source said.

A BJP leader said the PM's meeting will serve as a show of strength by the party and the AIADMK in the run-up to polls. "Till now, our alliance was perceived as weak, which was not helping us in the perception battle. We now want to up the game, and that is why we are formalising the alliance early," another said.

SHOW OF STRENGTH

- AIADMK-BJP to showcase unity as Modi set to kick off poll drive
- Rally near Chennai to mark first joint show of alliance after revived ties
- AIADMK, BJP trying to bring DMDK and TTV Dhinakaran's AMMK into the fold

BJP readies chargesheet against Trinamool

AMRITA MADHUKALYA
NEW DELHI, DHNS

With the Assembly elections in West Bengal not too far away, the BJP has sharpened its attack on the ruling TMC and will prepare a constituency-wise chargesheet of the party.

The BJP recently launched a campaign to prepare chargesheets for all 294 seats in the state. It has already issued chargesheets in eight assembly constituencies.

The BJP's chargesheet would highlight what the party termed as the failures of the Mamata Banerjee government, and highlight local issues. It would include civic, infrastructure and law and order issues.

Accusing the Mamata Banerjee-led government of neglecting basic civic amenities, in their chargesheets for eight assembly seats, the BJP has stressed on region-specific issues such as unemployment and access to basic services. The chargesheets also focus on crimes against women as well as corruption.

The BJP further accused the TMC government of corruption and mismanagement, which it alleged has led to the failure of schemes like the Banglar Bari scheme, the PM Awas Yojana, and the Swachh Bharat Mission in the Howrah-Shivpur belt. The chargesheet also alleges issues such as waterlogging, power outages, and the supply of contaminated drinking water.

The BJP also alleges a shortage of doctors, medicines, and diagnostics in hospitals, as well as police inaction and a lack of administrative accountability.

The saffron party has struggled to find a solid foothold in the state. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, the BJP managed an impressive 40.2% vote share and 18 Lok Sabha seats. However, in the 2021 assembly elections, the vote share dipped to 38.14% and the BJP won only 77 seats in the 294-member assembly.

Reacting to the allegations, TMC MP Abhishek Banerjee asked party workers to prepare for constituency-level counter-attacks.

"I am hearing that the BJP will issue chargesheets against our MLAs. Wherever they do so, we must respond with local development data," he said.

(With PTI inputs)

Saffron outfits demand ban on Urs at Taj Mahal, stage protest

LUCKNOW, DHNS: Saffron outfits have demanded a ban on the forthcoming three-day-long Urs, commemorating the death anniversary of a Sufi saint at his shrine, at the Taj Mahal in Uttar Pradesh's Agra.

Workers of the All India Hindu Mahasabha on Tuesday staged a demonstration in front of the monument in protest against the proposed event, scheduled to begin on Thursday.

They also submitted a memorandum to the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), demanding that the Urs be banned.

Mahasabha president Meera Rathore warned that saffron activists would organise a Shiv Tandav—Lord Shiva's powerful cosmic dance symbolising creation and destruction—inside the Taj Mahal if the Urs was permitted.

A petition seeking a ban on the Urs is pending before a district court in Agra and is scheduled to come up for hearing on Thursday.

1,129 farmers died by suicide in Marathwada region in 2025

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR, PTI: More than 5,000 farmers ended their lives in central Maharashtra's Marathwada region in the last five years with the highest number of suicides being recorded in 2025, an official report said on Wednesday.

As many as 1,129 farmers committed suicide in 2025 while a total of 5,075 suicides have been reported from 2021 to the present, said a report prepared by the divisional commissioner's office.

Marathwada division comprises the districts of Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, Jalna, Parbhani, Nanded, Beed, Dharashiv, Hingoli and Latur.

Beed district recorded the highest number of such deaths, 256, in 2025.

Ex gratia aid was given to the families of 193 farmers.

District-wise farmer suicides in 2025 were as follows: Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar-224, Jalna-90, Parbhani-104, Hingoli- 68, Nanded- 170, Beed- 256, Latur- 76, Dharashiv-141.

Ryots' crisis

2021	887
2022	1,023
2023	1,088
2024	948
2025	1,129

In the past year, unseasonal rainfall was seen in pockets of Marathwada in May. Excess rainfall of 125 to 150% was recorded in various districts of the region, said an official. The region was devastated by floods in September-October 2025.

(*If you are in distress or having suicidal tendencies, please reach out to these 24/7 helplines: KIRAN 1800-599-0019 or Arogya Sahayavani at 104 for help*)

MOO PLEASE

Stray cattle meet smart alerts in NHAI's safety pilot

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Aimed at reducing accidents that are caused by sudden cattle movement on national highways, particularly during fog and low-visibility conditions, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) on Wednesday announced the launch of a pilot project in two national highway corridors to provide real-time stray cattle safety alerts.

The pilot project is being implemented on the Jaipur-Agra and Jaipur-Rewari corridors. As part of the initiative, Reliance Jio has upgraded its platform to enable nationwide delivery of these alerts, the NHAI said in a statement.

Last month, the NHAI signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Reliance Jio to introduce a telecom-based safety alert system across the national highway network.

"Under the pilot project, location-based alerts will be triggered for national highway commuters, providing advance warnings approximately 10 km before identified high-risk stretches. This will give commuters lead time to take precautionary measures," the NHAI said.

Advisories on stray cattle will be delivered via Flash SMS and voice alerts.

During the pilot, to ensure effective communication with commuters, safety advisories will be delivered first through a Flash SMS, followed by a voice alert.

To prevent alert fatigue, repeat alerts will not be issued to the same user within a 30-minute window.

The initiative will leverage telecom technology to deliver timely, targeted advisories, thereby improving driver awareness and enhancing safety on national highways, the statement said.

Sankranti exodus? Bihar Congress MLAs fuel defection buzz

ABHAY KUMAR
PATNA

Bihar may be headed for fresh political turbulence just two months after the NDA's landslide in the Assembly elections, when it secured 202 of the 243 seats.

The grapevine is thick with speculation that all six Congress MLAs, or at least two-thirds of them, are poised to switch sides. That means at least four legislators could be ready to trade party colours for greener pastures.

Two reliable sources within the ruling party have confirmed that the Congress, which suffered a drubbing in the November 2025 polls, winning merely six seats, is on the verge of complete decimation. This political realignment is expected anytime after the inauspicious period (known as Kharmas in the Hindu calendar) ends. The auspicious phase begins on Sankranti, January 14.

The ruling combine's claim gained traction when the Bihar Congress hosted a traditional dahi-chura (curd and flattened rice) feast on the eve of Sankranti at its Sadaquat Ashram headquarters. Not a single one of the six Congress MLAs attended the event. NDA ministers claim they are gearing up to cross the fence.

While Bihar Congress president Rajesh Ram insisted that NDA leaders are "spreading rumours", Sanjay Singh, LJP minister in the Nitish Kumar government, countered, "After Sankranti, there will be a mass exodus from the Congress, as all its legislators are likely to join the NDA."

Sources in the ruling party say the Congress MLAs are most likely to join the JD(U), reaffirming their loyalty and support to CM Nitish.

"This suits Nitish as well, since the JD(U) tally would rise from 85 to 91—surpassing BJP's 89 as the single largest party. Besides, Nitish may be eyeing the lone BSP MLA to shore up numbers, positioning himself again as the big brother, where no partner can dictate terms," said political scientist Ajay Kumar.

FRESH TURBULENCE

- Speculation rife that all six Cong MLAs, or at least four, may join ruling side
- Defection likely after the current inauspicious period ends
- Auspicious phase begins January 14
- Sources say MLAs likely to join JD(U), boosting Nitish's tally

SAINIK SCHOOL KODAGU (KARNATAKA)
DIST: KODAGU PIN: 571 232

CANCELLATON OF WALK-IN-INTERVIEW SCHOOL MEDICAL OFFICER

It is hereby informed that the WALK-IN-INTERVIEW for the post of SCHOOL MEDICAL OFFICER, which was scheduled to be held on 16 January 2026, stands cancelled due to administrative reasons. Inconvenience caused is regretted.

Principal

CITY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL HOSAPETE

No:5833/CMC/HPT/MF/Tender/2025-26Dated: 09.01.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION (IFT) E-PROCUREMENT

2025-26th Municipal Fund Tenders are invited for the work mentioned below as per KTPP act 2000 in two cover system are invited from the Contractors/Firms registered in KPWD as mentioned below. in e-procurement the contractors / firms will have to upload all information, documents and rates etc., www.eproc.karnataka.govt.in 1) Tender Last Date: 27.01.2026. TIME :4.00 PM. 2) Opening for Technical Bid will be on Date: 28.1.2026TIME: 4.30 PM. 4) OPENING PLACE OF TENDER: CMC HOSAPETE. 1) DMA/2025-26/IND5833 2) Name of the Work :Supply of various Chemicals to 1st & 2nd Stage Water Treatment Plant in Hosapete city , 3) Estimated Cost Rs in (Lakh) 122.50 EMD Rs.183750.00/- any other information required can be obtained from the office of the CMC Hosapete during the working hours

Sd/-Assistant Executive Engineer, CMC Hosapete Sd/-Municipal Commissioner CMC Hosapete.

DIPR/Vijayanagar/2025-26/KSMCA/RO No/464

ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಪಂಚಾಯತ್, ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ
ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು, ಪಂಚಾಯತ್ ರಾಜ್
ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರಿಂಗ್ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ

ಇ-ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 13/2025-26
ದಿನಾಂಕ: 16.12.2025

ಸ್ಟ್ಯಾಂಡರ್ಡ್ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಡಾಕ್ಯೂಮೆಂಟ್ ಕೆ.ಡಬ್ಲ್ಯೂ-I, II ರ ನಿಬಂಧನೆಗೊಳಪಟ್ಟಂತೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯದ ರಾಜ್ಯಪಾಲರ ಪರವಾಗಿ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆ ಅಧಿನಿಯಮ 2000ರ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಐಟಂವಾರು ಇ-ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಏಕ ಲಕೋಟೆ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ ವಿಭಾಗ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯ ಈ ಕೆಳಗೆ ನಮೂದಿಸಿರುವ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಸೂಕ್ತ ದರ್ಜೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಎನ್‌ರೋಲ್ ಮಾಡಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿರುವ ಅಧಿಕೃತ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಇ-ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ದಾಖಲೆಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಇಲಾಖಾ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in** ಮೂಲಕ ಅರ್ಜಿಯನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೋರಲಾಗಿದೆ. (1) E-procurement ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಹಾಗೂ ಷೆಡ್ಯೂಲ್-ಬಿ ಗಳನ್ನು ವೆಬ್ ಸೈಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಭರ್ತಿ ಮಾಡಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: **22.01.2026ರ 16.30 ರವರೆಗೆ. (2) ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್‌ನ್ನು ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 23.01.2026ರಂದು 4.35 ನಂತರ. (3) ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್‌ನ್ನು ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 27.01.2026ರಂದು 11.30 ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾದಲ್ಲಿ. (4) ಅರ್ಜಿ ಶುಲ್ಕ (ಹಿಂದಿರುಗಿಸಲಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ): ಹಿಂದಿರುಗಿಸಲಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ.**

ಸಹಿ/- ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು,
ಪಂ.ರಾ.ಇಂ. ವಿಭಾಗ, ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ/ಆರ್.ಓ.ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:362/ಕೆಎಸ್‌ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025-26

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPP Portal Only)

KPTCL invites bid for the following works and services :

No. CEE/Tr(Op)Z/HSN/SEE(O)/AE-2/2025-26/12508-12 Date: 13.01.2026

1) Bid Enquiry no. : KPTCL/TZH/KVR/2025-26/TLM Package-22/Call 2 for replacement of single string porcelain insulator by double string Composite Polymer Long Rod Insulators and jumper replacement works in various lines coming under TLM sub-division Kavoor of Hassan Transmission (Operations) Zone.

No. CEE/Tr(Op)Z/HSN/SEE(O)/AEE-1/2025-26/12513-16 Date: 13.01.2026

2) Bid Enquiry no. : KPTCL/2025-26/SS/WORK_INDENT3059 CALL2 for **Combined package** of the following works on **Partial Turnkey Basis** including supply of all materials/equipments and erection (including Civil works) of all materials/equipments, testing & commissioning:

1. Augmentation of existing 2x10MVA, 110/11kV Power transformer by 2x20MVA, 110/11kV Power transformer with NIFPS along with 2 no's. of additional MCVCB switch gear at **110/11kV sub-station Gandasi,** in Arasikere Taluk, Hassan District
2. Augmentation of 2x10MVA NGEF Make Power Transformer-1&2 by 2x20MVA Power Transformer with NIFPS along with 2 no's of Additional 11kV MCVCB Feeders at **110/11kV, MUSS, Banavara,** Arasikere Taluk, Hassan District - **Reserved for SC category.**

No. CEE/Tr(Op)Z/HSN/SEE(O)/AEE-1/FS-01/2025-26/12519-22 Date: 14.01.2026

3) Bid Enquiry no. : KPTCL/TZH/HSN/Line Maintenance tender-03 for Providing Services for carrying out Routine Preventive Maintenance and Breakdown Maintenance works of 400kV D/C UPCL-Hebbanahally-Shantigrama Transmission Lines owned by KPTCL in the jurisdiction of Transmission (Operations) Zone, Hassan in the State of Karnataka for a period of Three years.

The detailed notification regarding subject enquiry in the E-Tendering process can be obtained by logging on to website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** with hyper link "tenders" on or after **16.01.2026.** Any other details can be obtained from Office of the undersigned.

Sd/- Chief Engineer (Electy.),
Transmission (Operations) Zone, KPTCL, 3rd Floor,
Prasarana Bhavana, Santhepete, B.M. Road, Hassan – 573 201

City Municipal Council, Ranebennur
No/CMC/PWD/AMRUT 2.0/CR-13/2025-26 DATED: 12-01-

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through e-Procurement Portal)

Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Ordinance 1999-2000 Act 2000 as per Standard Tender Document Rules under Restricted under JAL-HI AMRUT in Total Rs. **75.00** lakhs Indent No. DMA/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT 51983 Call-2 01 work The undersigned invites tender through e-procurement portal from qualified contractors registered with Karnataka Public Works Department for the works in Two Cover format. In Annexure KW-3 A Eligible Contractors E-Procurement Website www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in can participate in the tender and publication details on the website of the municipal office http//www.ranebennurcity.mrc.gov.in Available in For more details information can be obtained from Municipal Council office hours and e-Procurement Assistant Phone No.: **+91-46010000 +91-8068948777**.

Note : 1) In case of any change in the estimated amount, tendered amount mentioned before the above work, the tendered amount mentioned in the tender document will be final. 2) Any change in the following dates shall be noted in the e-procurement portal and no announcements shall be issued.

(1) Last Date & Time for Enquire for Tender : **20-01-2026** Time : 15.30 (2) Last date and time for submission of tender : **20-01-2026** Time : 17.30 (3) Technical Bid Tender Opening Date & Time : **22-01-2026** Time : 11.30 (4) Financial Bid Tender Opening Date & Time or after approval by competent authority : **27-01-2026** Time : 11.30

Sd/- Commissioner
City Municipal Council, Ranebennur

DIPR/Haveri/KSMCA/631/2025-26

Government of Karnataka
DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND SPORTS
State Youth Centre, Nrupathunga Road, Bengaluru - 560001.
Tel : 080-22215601, 22211246, Fax: 080 22215602

No: DYES/CR.PRO/K.V.K.M/02/2025-26 Date: 14.01.2026

SHORT TERM E-TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT
(Through E-Procurement Portal Only)

Contents:- Regarding invitation of tender for supply of equipment to Sports Science Centre, Mysuru and Belagavi of the Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports:-

As per the Karnataka Public Procurement Transparency Act, 1999 and Rules 2000, e-tender has been invited through e-procurement portal by the eligible entity for the supply of equipment to the Sports Science Centre, Mysuru and Belagavi under the Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports.

Tender Details : 1) Supply of equipment to Sports Science Centre, Mysuru and Belagavi, **: The tender amount is Rs.83,05,993/-, 2)** EMD : **Rs. 1,66,120/-, 3)** Tender Inviting Authority **:** Deputy Director, Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports, **4)** Tender Approving Authority : Commissioner, Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports Nrupatunga Road, Bangalore 560001. **5)** Appellate Authority : Principal Secretary to the Government Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports, Multi-storey building Bangalore 560001. **6)** Last date for submission of application : **29.01.2026 4.30 PM. 7)** Opening of technical bid : **30-01-2026 5.00 PM. 8)** Tender Opening Place And a place to get more information: Office of the Commissioner, Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports, State Youth Center, Nrupatunga Road, Bangalore-560001. Phone Number: 080-22215601.

The bidder shall have the prescribed qualifications in respect of this tender. The Commissioner, Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports reserves the right to award or reject the tender without assigning any reason. They don't have to give any reasons for this.

Sd/-
Deputy Director (Sports)
Dept. of Youth Empowerment and Sports

DIPR/CP/5023/NR/2025-26

Karnataka State Minerals Corporation Limited
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
Regd. Office: TTMC 'A' Block, 5th Floor, BMTC Building, Shanthinagar, K. H. Road, Bengaluru-560 027.
Phone: 080-2227 8813 / 14 / 15 / 16, Fax No.080-2221 3172,
Website: www.ksmc.karnataka.gov.in

No. KSMCL/PROD/Tender/TIOM/D-1-Dump/2025-26/2790 Date: 14.01.2026

e-TENDER INVITATION

KSMCL invites short-term e-Tender for the work of Re-handling from the dump (Excavation), Crushing and Screening work at Thimmappanagudi Iron Ore Mine (TIOM), Sandur Taluk, Ballari District, Karnataka under e-tendering system through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Tender Reference	KSMCL/2025-26/SE0054/Call-2
Downloading documents from website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in	From 14/01/2026
Last date for receiving queries	17/01/2026 at 5.00 p.m.
Pre-bid meeting	19/01/2026
Last date and time for uploading of e-tender in E-procurement platform on or before	21/01/2026 Upto 5:00 p.m.
The Technical Bid will be opened Online by the Authorized Officer on	23/01/2026 at 11:00 a.m.
Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	Rs. 5,78,000/-
Address for Communication	**General Manager (P) Karnataka State Minerals Corporation Limited,** TTMC,'A' Block, 5th Floor, BMTC Building, K.H. Road, Shanthinagar, Bangalore.560027. Ph. No: 080-22278813/ 14/15.

DIPR/CP/AAPL/RO5029/2025-26

Sd/- General Manager (P)

KARNATAKA HOUSING BOARD
3rd Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bengaluru - 560 009.

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

Karnataka Housing Board invite Tender from the eligible Pre qualified contractors & willing to Pre qualify in Karnataka Housing Board through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal for below mentioned work.

Name of the work: Rectification & Development of Roads in Block-5 of Suryanagar Phase-III, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru.
Work Indent No: KHB/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT 690 & IFT No.136/2025-26 Date: 13.01.2026. Amount put to tender: Rs.1,93,12,929/-
Last date for submission of Bid: 27.01.2026 upto 4.00 PM

For further information, contact below mentioned office address: Executive Engineer, Karnataka Housing Board, Cauvery Bhavan, Bengaluru. Tel: 080-22273511 / 080-22100077 Website:https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in

Sd/- Executive Engineer
Karnataka Housing Board, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/5036/CCL/2025-26

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
MINOR IRRIGATION & GROUND WATER DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation & Ground Water Development Division,Hassan

IFT No.31/2025-26, Dated: 14.01.2026

Short term tenders are invited from eligible Agencies in two cover system through KPPP portal of GOK (website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in) for Hassan District works as per KW-1,3&4, maximum tender amount is Rs.128.50 lakhs & minimum tender amount is Rs.3.20 lakhs. The last date of receipt of tender is 23-01-2026 upto 5.00 PM hours. Further detail can be had from KPP-portal and the above office during office working hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, MI & GWD Division, Hassan.

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಹಿಸನಿ/ಹಾಸನ/938/ಕೆಎಸ್‌ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025-26

BENGALURU WEST CITY CORPORATION
Senior Assistant Director of Horticulture
Zone-1, Rajarajeshwari Nagara, Bangalore-560091.

No. SADH/BWCC/RRN/TENDER/03/2025-26 Date: 14.01.2026

LETTER OF INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT)
(SHORT TERM) (TWO COVER SYSTEM) (Through GOK e-procurement Portal only)

A) The Senior Assistant Director of Horticulture (Rajarajeshwari Nagara), (Referred to as Employer in these documents) invites tenders to Implement in accordance with KTPP rules 2000, from eligible and experienced Person/Agencies / Firms (Referred to as Tenderers in these documents) registered in Labour department Maintenance of Parks.
B) The tenderers are advised to note the minimum qualification criteria specified in Clause 3 of the instructions to tenderers to qualify for award of the contract (standard tender document KW-1,KW-2 KW-3 & KW-4)
C) Tender documents may be downloaded from Government of Karnataka e-Procurement website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/#/portal/portal-home** under login for Contractors.

Sl. No.	Name of the Works/Estimate Cost/EMD Amount./Category
1	Supply of water through tankers for Parks Medians and Circles in Yeshwanthpura Assembly Constituency. Estimate Cost : **Rs. 25,00,000/-**, EMD Amount : **Rs.50,000/-**, Category : **Others**

Calender of events as follows:
(1) Date of Notification **: 14.01.2026, (2)** Tender can be downloaded from**: 16.01.2026, (3)** Tender Closing Date : **21.01.2026** at **5.00 PM, (4)** Technical bid opening date: **22.01.2026 11.00 AM Onwards, (5)** Financial bid opening date: **After Approval of Technical bids.**

Sd/- Senior Assistant Director of Horticulture,(Rajarajeshwarinagar Zone-1), BWCC.

GREATER BENGALURU AUTHORITY
Office of the Executive Engineer, Division-2,
Project Implementation Unit, 9th Floor, Shopping Complex,
4th Block, Jayanagara, Bengaluru - 560011.

No: EE-2/GBA/PIU/TEND/02/COR/2025-26 Date: 14.01.2026

CORRIGENDUM-1 (TWO COVER SYSTEM)
(Through GOK KPP Portal https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in only)

Name of work: Providing PMC Services including Supervision, Quality control for "Construction of flood protection structures to SWD including RCC retaining walls. Water retention structures, Nature based solution structures / Bridges and culverts under Karnataka Water Security and Resilience Programme (KWSRP) with externally funded project (World Bank) in Bommanahalli Zone Package-I".

Reference: This office tender Notification No: EE-2/GBA/PIU/TEND/02/2025-26, Dated: 13-01-2026

This is to notify that due to technical reasons, the above tender notification should be read as below.

Sl. No.	Calendar of Events	As per Modified Dates
1	Tender Document may be downloaded through E-portal form	14-01-2026
2	Pre-bid Meeting	17.01.2026 at 4.00 PM Office of the Chief Engineer, Project Implementation Unit, 9th Floor. Shopping Complex, 4th Block. Jayanagara, Bengaluru - 560011
3	Last Date & Time for receipt of Tenders	22-01-2026 up to 4:00 PM
4	Opening of Technical bid	23-01-2026 up to 4:30 PM

All other Terms and Conditions of the notification remains the same.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Division-2
Project Implementation Unit, Greater Bengaluru Authority

Government of Karnataka
(Infrastructure Development and Port and Inland Water Transport Department)
Karnataka Maritime Board
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, PORT DIVISION, BAITKHOL, KARWAR, UTTAR KANNADA-581302
Phone: 08382-229672 Email: eepdkwr4@gmail.com

NO.EE/PDK/TND/2025-26/895 Date: 12-01-2026

Invitation for tenders (IFT) Re-Tender Notification

On behalf of Governor of Karnataka, **02 Works (Tender Amount Rs.42.25 and Rs.75.46 Lakhs)** Tender is invited in E-Procurement to execute the service. To participate in E-Procurement and for more information may be obtained in **(http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in)** website. Last date for clarification and queries for tender is **16-01-2026 at 4.00 PM** and Last date for Tender Submission is **19-01-2026 at 5.00 PM.** For further extension refer above mentioned website. No separate paper notification will be issued.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Port Division, Karwar

DIPR/ADK/KSMCA/942/25-26 Dt.13.01.2026

National Health Mission
KARNATAKA STATE HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE SOCIETY
Arogya Soudha, 1st Floor, Magadi Road, Bengaluru - 23
Ph: 080-23113584 e-mail: pdrch-hfws@karnataka.gov.in

No: LWSTC/NTEP/STDC/03/2025-26 (Part File) (E-1926005) Date: 14.01.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through e-Procurement)

For Supply of Laboratory Consumables

National Health Mission (NHM) invites tender for Manufacturers/ Authorized Dealer to participate with necessary documents for **Supply of Laboratory Consumables** under NTEP program.

IND No: NHM/2025-26/IND0035/CALL-2

The detailed notification regarding eligibility and other details can be obtained by logging on to **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in**. The tender document can be downloaded through "e-procurement portal" from **14/01/2026** onwards and last date for receipt of tender is on or before **29/01/2026 at 05.30pm.**

Further details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned during the office hours from 11:00 am to 05:30 pm.

Sd/-
Project Director (RCH)

DIPR/CP/5028/SA/2025-26

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
Office of the Executive Engineer,
PWD, Tumkur Division, Tumkur. Phone : 0816-2272479.

No. : E.E./K.P.W.D./Tmk/A.E.-2/T.No 45/2025-26 Date : 12-01-2026

SHORT TERM INVITATION FOR TENDER

(KW-3 & KW-4) E-TENDER NOTIFICATON

On behalf of Governor of Karnataka, Tenders are invited in **Two Cover System for Class-3 & above** Contractors registered in PWD for 06 Work under 4059 CMIDP Head of Account in the jurisdiction of Tumkur Division through KPPP Portal **(https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in).** The Dates are Published as below.

Maximum Amount Put to Tender Rs. 157.99 Lakhs and Minimum Amount Put to Tender Rs. 63.73 Lakhs Maximum EMD Amount Rs. 2,36,995/- and Minimum EMD Amount Rs. 79,780/-.

1) Last Date for Tender Information Enquires : 20-01-2026 @ 17.30, 2) Last Date for Submission of Tender : 21-01-2026 @ 16.00, 3) Date of Opening the Technical Bid : 22-01-2026 @ 16.30, 4) Date of Opening the Financial Bid : 23-01-2026 @17.00.

Note : Turnover Certificate without UDI Number will not be considered. Here after any changes with reference to this Notified in E-Portal only.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
PWD, Division, Tumkur.

DIPR/Tumakuru/70/Manipal/2025-26

BENGALURU NORTH CITY CORPORATION
Office Of The Executive Engineer, Hebbal Division, BNCC, Zone-2
2nd Floor BNCC (Old BBMP) Bulding, Opp to Indira Canteen,
JC Nagar Main Road, Munireddy Palya, Bengaluru-560006

No:BNCC-Z2/EE/HBL/PR/06/2025-26 Date: 14.01.2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

(Through GOK KPP Portal https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in only)

Tenders on item rate basis are invited by the undersigned for the works mentioned below from the registered contractors of GBA-Bengaluru North City Corporation, or equivalent registration with CPWD/ KPWD/Railways / MES or any State Government Organizations.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work
1.	Construction of CC Road, Near Masjid Ashwath Nagar and construction of culverts in CIL Layout, Lottegollahalli Venkatachari Village Nagara Bhovi colony in Ward No.61, Radhakrishna Temple Call-2, **Est Cost : Rs. 25.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 25000.00**
2.	Comprehensive Developments of Roads and Drains in Prabhakar Layout and Surrounding Areas in Ward NK 64 V Nagenahalli Call-2. Ward No. 64. **Est Cost : Rs. 60.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 120000.00 (1.00 lakh through e-payment (NEFT) balance Rs. 20000.00 through BG/FDR, BG /FDR should be submit of before opening Technical bid)**
3.	Comprehensive Developments of Roads and Drains in Nrupathunga Layout and Surrounding Areas in Ward No. 67 Ganganagar, Call-2. **Est Cost : Rs. 25.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 50000.00**
4.	Comprehensive Developments of Roads and Drains in LD Block and Surrounding Areas n Ward No. 67 Ganganagar Call-2. **Est Cost : Rs. 25.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 25000.00**
5.	Comprehensive Developments to Roads and Drains at 2nd Block RT Nagar and Surrounding areas in Ward No 68 JC Nagar Call-2. **Est Cost : Rs. 25.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 25000.00**
6.	Comprehensive Developments to Roads and Drains at Dinnur and Surrounding Areas in Ward No. 68 JC Nagara Call-2. **Est Cost : Rs. 75.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 75000.00**
7.	Comprehensive Developments to Roads and Drains at Nandiview Layout and Surrounding Areas in Ward No 68 J C Nagar Call-2. **Est Cost : Rs. 25.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 25000.00**

Calendar of Events : (1) Tender Documents can be uploaded in KPP-Portal from **16.01.2026. (2)** Pre-Bid Meeting will be held on **23.01.2026 at 15:00 Hrs** Chief Engineer-Zone-2, Bengaluru North City Corporation, 3rd Floor, Mini Vidhanasouda, NES Circle, Yalahanka New Town Bangalore-560006. **(3)** Last Date for uploading the Filled proposals is **29.01.2026 up to 16:00 hours. (4)** Date of Opening of Technical Bid is **30.01.2026 after 16:30 hours. (5)** Date of Opening of Financial Bid will be after Approval of Technical BID.

Sd/- Executive Engineer Hebbal Division, Zone-2, BNCC

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT OFFICER, MINORITY WELFARE DEPARTMENT KALABURAGI

No. : DO/MWDK/New Staff/Tender/CR-/2025-26 Date : 14-01-2026

E-PROCURMENT SHORT TERM - TENDER NOTIFICATION

TENDER DOCUMENT
FOR SUPPLY OF TO PRE-METRIC, POST METRIC HOSTELS, RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS & RESIDENTIAL PU COLLEGE COMING UNDER MINORITY WELFARE DEPARTMENT KALABURAGI FOR THE YEAR-2025-26

Department of Minority welfare Department, Kalaburagi Dist hereby invites Agencies, providing man power Group 'C' and 'D' Out Source to the Minority Hostel's, MMDR School's, Govt. Muslim Residential School, Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Residential School, Moulana Azad Model School, MMDR PU College's, Dist. Office, and Taluka Information Centre's.

1) Tender Notification date: **Dated: 14.01.2026.** 2) Amount put to Tender No of Out Source Employees : **Rs. 858.17 Lakhs No. Employee: 434,** 3) E-procurement form Fees: As per E-procurement, 4) Tender commencement date and time: **14.01.2026 to 23.01.2026.** 5) Last date & Time for submission of Tender: **23.01.2026. @ 5.30pm,** 6) Pre- Bid meeting Date and place: Place: Dist. Minority office Kalaburagi. **Date: 17.01.2026 Time:11.30Am,** 7) Date & Time of opening of Technical bid: Place: Dist. Minority office Kalaburagi. **Date: 27.01.2026 Time:11.30 AM**, 8) Date & Time of opening of Financial Bid : Place: Dist. Minority office Kalaburagi. **Date: 29.01.2026 Time:11.30AM**, 9) EMD Amount: **Rs. 12,87,255/-,** 10) Venue of opening of tenders & address for communication DISTRICT OFFICER, Minority Welfare Department, Kalaburagi. 1St Floor, KUDA Office Kalaburagi Ph:08472-247260.

Interested eligible Registered in e-procurement portal bidders can down load the bid documents with visiting the web site www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in.

Sd/- DISTRICT OFFICER
MINORITY WELFARE DEPARTMENT KALABURAGI.

DIPR/Kalaburagi/976/KSMC&A/2025-26

KARNATAKA STATE MANGO DEVELOPMENT & MARKETING CORPORATION (Ltd.,)
(A Government of Karnataka Enterprises)
1st Floor, Old Post Office Building, Veterinary College Campus,Hebbal, Bengaluru-24.
Telphone No-080-22236837 e-mail ID: ksmdmc@gmail.com

NO: KSMD&MCL.MD.ADH.29.2025-26 Date:12.01.2026

NOTICE INVITING TENDER (Tender ID:KSMDMCL/2025-26/SE0013)

Department of Horticulture, Government of Karnataka through the Karnataka State Mango Development and Marketing Corporation Limited (KSMDMCL), invites Request for Proposal (RFP) **"Selection of Developer for Setting Up of Multi Horticulture Produce Handling, Storage, Processing and Preservation Cluster at Yelavatti, Hangal Taluk, Haveri District, Karnataka Under PPP Mode on DBFOT Basis",** from eligible investors / developers. Selection of Developer for Setting Up of Multi Horticulture Produce Handling, Storage, Processing and Preservation Cluster at Yalavatti, Hangal Taluk, Haveri District, Karnataka Under PPP Mode on DBFOT Basis. Estimated Project Cost Rs. **35.07 Cr** , Area is **28.30** acres, EMD as Bid Security Rs.**35 Lakhs** , Concession Period **30 Years.** The RFP document along with Draft Concession Agreement (DCA) can be downloaded from the website- **https:// kppp.karnataka.gov.in,** from 12th January 2026, 05:00 Hrs. Pre bid meeting is scheduled on **22nd January 2026** at 12:00 Hrs IST, Last date for bid submission is **13th February 2026** till 17:00 Hrs IST

Sd/- Senior Assistant Director of Horticulture
Karnataka State Mango Development & Marketing Corp. Ltd.

DIPR/DDU/SHIRDISAI/5015/2025-26

DECCAN HERALD
ESTABLISHED 1948

Setbacks and a sobering moment

The failure of the 64th mission of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C62) is a major disappointment and a setback to the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the country's space programme. Questions on risks and reliability have been raised around the PSLV – considered ISRO's workhorse launcher – following two consecutive failures. The rocket carried EOS-N1, an earth observation satellite, and 15 other payloads, including some from Spain, Brazil, and Nepal. Developed by ISRO, the EOS-N1 had hyperspectral imaging capabilities and was to be used for civilian and strategic purposes, including advanced surveillance. All the payloads have been lost with the rocket. This setback comes eight months after the failed PSLV-C61 mission, which carried a remote-sensing satellite, EOS-09. It has been observed that both missions failed because of anomalies during the third stage of the flight.

Following the failed May 2025 mission, a pressure drop in the combustion chamber of the third-stage engine was cited as a reason for the anomaly. With the PSLV-C62 mission, ISRO has initiated a detailed analysis on the issues observed at the end of the PS3 (third stage) of the vehicle. There is much that rides on ISRO's launches – reputation, commercial interests, and scientific and engineering ideas that are upgraded and fine-tuned after each mission. Over the years, the space agency has learnt from its failures and improved its performance. But repeated malfunctions will dent the reliability and credibility of the organisation. Satellites are conceived and designed for specific purposes and are aligned with timelines. Relaunching them will involve extensive planning and execution. ISRO's reputation has significantly risen with its recent spate of successful high-profile missions and its ability to undertake cost-effective launches. Governments and private companies around the world are increasingly leveraging space exploration across sectors. While the demand is steadily increasing, the launch capability remains limited. ISRO should not lose its stature in the global market and miss the opportunities.

ISRO must confront the two consecutive PSLV failures with a renewed focus on reliability

ISRO must address the doubts with an assurance that it can correct the mistakes, as it has done in the past, and that these failures would not define the way forward. It has lined up important missions, including the human spaceflight programme, Gaganyaan, and the setting up of an international space station. The PSLV was behind 64 of ISRO's 105 launch missions; only five of them have failed. The space agency needs to realign itself with the harsh reality that while success is often taken for granted, failures invite thorough and critical scrutiny.

Parks should not be spaces of exclusion

In June 2024, Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar assured Bengalureans that all parks would remain open through the day. In a dense, polluted city gasping for green space, the promise felt like a breath of fresh air. Yet, as January 2026 unfolds, that assurance rings hollow. Most neighbourhood parks never truly complied with the all-day directive. Gates continued to be shut between late morning and evening, often under local pressure. Now, the newly constituted Bengaluru South City Corporation has formalised this exclusion, issuing an official notification restricting park access to two windows – 5 am to 11 am and 4 pm to 8 pm. The move has triggered widespread public outrage, and rightly so. These truncated timings expose a deep bias in how public spaces are imagined. They cater almost exclusively to morning and evening walkers, while systematically excluding everyone else.

This policy disproportionately punishes the city's most vulnerable – the gig workers, domestic helpers, and daily-wage labourers. For them, parks are not leisure luxuries but essential shaded places to rest aching bodies, eat a packed lunch with dignity, or wait for the next job. Students, especially those living in cramped paying guest accommodations, lose vital spaces to study or simply breathe. Among the worst-affected are homemakers, whose mornings and evenings are consumed by household responsibilities, and who are free only during the midday hours, precisely when park gates are locked. For many women, that short afternoon walk or conversation with neighbours is not an indulgence but a necessary mental health break.

Truncated timings limit access of workers, women, and students to public green spaces

Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) officers and Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) cite familiar justifications: misuse, local opposition, maintenance challenges, and manpower shortage. None withstands scrutiny. The charge of misuse is frequently a euphemism for moral policing, targeting young people, couples, or anyone who does not fit a narrow social template. If security is the concern, the solution is obvious: appoint adequate security guards. Maintenance is an even weaker excuse. Lalbagh and Cubbon Park – open from dawn to dusk – are also maintained daily, without curtailing public access. The uncomfortable truth is that RWAs treat taxpayer-funded parks as private enclaves. These are public assets for Bengaluru's 1.4 crore residents, not gated backyards for the vocal few. A city that locks its parks during the day is not maintaining order; it is rationing dignity. This travesty must be reversed immediately, and timings extended from dawn to dusk. Bengaluru deserves green spaces that unite, not divide. Lock the excuses; unlock the gates.

A RIGHT TO INCOMPETENCE

The commanding heights or the common man?

When public authorities like the BDA evade regulation, it undermines the rule of law and legitimises State inefficiency

K P KRISHNAN

A curious bit of news recently emanated from the corridors of the Karnataka High Court. The Bangalore Development Authority (BDA), that venerable behemoth of urban planning, has filed a case against the Karnataka Real Estate Regulatory Authority (K-RERA). The BDA's contention is as simple as it is audacious: as a "public authority" performing sovereign functions of planning and development, it should be exempt, even for the non-sovereign activities, from the "rigorous" provisions of the RERA Act.

The issue under adjudication was the inordinate delay in developing the Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout (NPKL). The BDA's argument for seeking exemption is that there are likely to be significant financial constraints for the BDA to act as per RERA norms.

To the uninitiated, this might sound like a technical turf war between two wings of the State. But to an observer of Indian public policy, it is a depressing sense of *déjà vu*. We have seen this movie before, and it usually ends with the consumer – the very citizen for whom the State exists – getting the short end of the stick.

The BDA's argument rests on a fundamental misconception that has plagued Indian governance for decades: the idea that the nature of the *entity* (public ownership) determines the need for *regulation*. The underlying but unarticulated logic is that since a public body – whether statutory or a company-style undertaking – is not driven by the motive of profit maximisation but by "public welfare," it cannot, *ipso facto*, mistreat its consumers/citizens. Therefore, subjecting it to an independent regulator is an unnecessary and "hindering" redundancy.

This logic is not unique to the BDA. In the financial sector, public sector banks and insurance companies and their owner, the Government of India (GOI), have historically sought, and received, "special treatment" from the relevant sectoral regulators. Whether it is laxer capital adequacy norms or softer governance standards, the entities and the owner often argue that these entities are instruments of social policy and should not be shackled by the same rules that apply to the "greedy" private sector.

We see this same song being sung in the electricity sector. Public utilities frequently argue that because they are State-owned and serve the poor, they should be exempt from the stringent performance standards or tariff disciplines imposed by State Electricity Regulatory Commissions (SERCs).

From the perspective of economic theory and public law, this argument is not just wrong; it is dangerous. Regulation by statutory regulatory authorities (SRAs) is not a punishment for being private or for-profit. It is a response to correct the consequences of market failure.

In sectors such as real estate, banking, or utilities, we observe two classic market failures: information asymmetry and concentration of economic power. That is exactly why an empowered SRA was created in these sectors. As a consumer, I am not "happy" if I am cheated by a public sector entity than by a private developer. A delay of ten years in getting a plot or a house hurts just as much, whether the perpetrator is a private builder or a State authority. In fact, it hurts more when it is the State, because the power imbalance is more lopsided. The "nature of ownership" is irrelevant to the "nature of the harm".

History is a harsh teacher, and we have the scars to prove it. Consider the case of the Unit Trust of India (UTI). For years, UTI operated exactly like a mutual fund but was kept outside the jurisdiction of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), precisely because it was a "statutory" body. We know that mutual funds – whoever runs them – need to be transparent and solvent. Yet, we ignored the principle. The result? The US-64 crisis in the early 2000s, where millions of small savers saw their dreams evaporate, leading to a massive taxpayer-funded bailout.

Contrast this with the pharmaceutical sector. No one, not even the most ardent socialist, argues that a cough syrup made by a PSU should be exempt from the standards of the Drugs Controller General. We understand that a sub-standard drug is a sub-standard drug, regardless of who owns the factory. Why should a sub-standard house or a sub-standard bank, or a hugely delayed plot, be any different?

Rules apply, no exceptions

The lesson for the Karnataka legislature and the Parliament is clear. It is entirely within the realm of public policy to decide whether there is a need for a PSU in a particular sector. If the State believes that only the BDA can provide affordable housing, so be it. It is the same State and the legislature that have put in place the K-RERA to protect the consumers in the real estate sector. Hence, it is *not* open to that public authority or the State to argue that it should be kept out of the regulatory net.

Once the State enters the "marketplace" to provide a service for a consideration (as the BDA does when it sells sites), it must play by the same rules of transparency, accountability, and time-bound delivery that apply to everyone else.

The BDA's attempt to use its "sovereign" status as a shield against RERA is a regressive step. It seeks to undo the very "rule of law" that SRAs were designed to uphold. If we allow this exception, we are effectively but formally saying that the State has a "right to be inefficient" at the citizen's expense.

Statutory regulators must be at "arms-length" from the executive precisely because the executive is often the owner of the largest players in the market. To internalise this is the first step toward a mature 21st-century economy. The pernicious stand of the BDA must not only be defeated in court but should be repudiated by a clear policy mandate: Regulation follows the activity, not the owner.

(The writer is a former civil servant)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

When faith walked the streets at dawn

Dhanur Masa rituals once bound an entire village together

GEETA DHANANKAR

We moved to Marandahalli in the early nineties, in the quiet month of November, soon after my father retired. It is a small village of barely a thousand souls in Mulbagal taluk, where life moves at an unhurried pace and time seems to pause.

Until my grandmother was alive, the village had been a place of holidays and brief visits. Living there was different. Slowly, almost shyly, we began to understand its silences, its sounds, and its simple rhythms. What once felt unfamiliar soon began to feel like home.

December arrived, and with it came Dhanur Masa. The first morning startled us awake in a way we had never known before. At our doorstep stood an elderly man leading a group of 20 children, a torch flickering in his hand and casting light on their eager faces. In their hands were a tabla, harmonium and other musical instruments; in their voices, devotion. They sang in chorus, offering their early-morning prayers to Lord Rama.

We opened the door unsure, unprepared, and slightly bewildered. We stood there silently, watching this sacred little procession unfold. It was our house help who gently guided us, reminding us of tradition—to offer rice and a few coins.

This ritual marked the celebration of the newly arrived crop, a season of gratitude when the very first share of the harvest was offered to the lord before it reached any home or hearth.

The next morning, they returned. This time, we were ready. Rice, a few coins, groundnuts and whatever else our farm had yielded were kept aside the night before. As the days passed, the group grew larger and their voices stronger. My mother, moved by their sincerity, began adding chocolates and homemade snacks to our offering. We waited eagerly for those dawn visits—listening, watching, and once the singing faded down the street, slipping back under our blankets, carrying the warmth of those moments into sleep.

For an entire month, those songs became the rhythm of our mornings.

On the final day of Dhanur Masa, all that had been collected—rice, lentils, grains, and offerings from every home—was brought together. A single meal was cooked and shared as *prasada*, binding the village once again in devotion and gratitude.

Recently, I returned to Marandahalli during the same season. The change was unmistakable. Only a handful of children came, and even they arrived only when requested. Once, every house had opened its doors willingly. Rangolis bloomed at thresholds, coffee simmered on stoves, and freshly cooked food awaited these young messengers of faith.

Today, village life too has begun its drift towards urbanisation, leaving behind age-old traditions. What once bound the entire village together now survives largely in memory and story. Yet, in some quiet corner of the heart, the echo of those early-morning *bhajans* still lingers—soft, sincere, and full of devotion—reminding us of a time when faith was simple, doors were always open, and togetherness was a way of life.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The world must push back against US' coercive politics

The Trump administration in the United States is increasingly seen as a destabilising force because of its erratic policies and coercive diplomacy. Neighbouring countries and adversaries are pressured through tariffs, threats, or actions that disregard national sovereignty, as seen in recent confrontational moves against countries such as Venezuela, Iran, and Cuba, and even in the casual talk of acquiring territories like Greenland. Such conduct reflects a troubling return to expansionist thinking, where power is asserted through intimidation rather than dialogue. Iran's warning of serious consequences in the event of an attack underlines the grave risks of escalation and wider conflict. The international community must not remain silent. Expansionism and coercion are unacceptable in the 21st century. A firm, collective stand is needed to uphold sovereignty, international law, and a rules-based global order.

S Sundara Pandian, Bengaluru

Keep fares fair

The proposed 5% annual fare increase for Namma Metro starting February is a blow to daily commuters. Public transport should serve the public, not profit from them, especially given Bengaluru's traffic woes. BMRCL should focus on boosting ridership and alternative revenue streams rather than burdening working-class passengers with operational losses.

Bhumi Avinash, Bengaluru

Support Iran's people

The situation in Iran following protests against the repressive regime is appalling. Protests stem from price rises and, more fundamentally, the regime's suppression of human rights and freedoms. Women are treated as chattel, lacking basic rights. The 1979 revolution brought in a regime enforcing archaic laws, and people now protest to reclaim their freedom. India should extend moral support to Iran's people in their struggle.

K R Jayaprakash Rao, Mysuru

Prioritise diplomacy

The report 'Trump promises 'help is on its way' and tells Iranians to keep protesting' (Jan 14) raises serious human rights concerns. Encouraging protests without ensuring protection or accountability puts civilians at risk. Human rights shouldn't be used as a foreign policy tool. International responses should prioritise de-escalation, civilian protection, and diplomatic efforts, not inflammatory rhetoric.

Saisha Verma, Bengaluru

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: **letters@deccanherald.co.in** (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

The United States needs Greenland for the purpose of national security. It is vital for the Golden Dome that we are building...NATO becomes far more formidable and effective with Greenland in the hands of the United States...

Donald Trump, US President

Political language is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind.

George Orwell

TO BE PRECISE

IN PERSPECTIVE

Tax cuts and a Rs-3 trillion hole

Last year's giveaways have failed to boost consumption and hindered the government's tax revenue growth

SUBHASH CHANDRA GARG

The Government of India is facing severe headwinds on the tax revenue front as it prepares the Union Budget 2026-2027.

For 2025-2026, the government budgeted gross tax receipts (GTRs) – the total receipts from all central taxes – at Rs 42.7 trillion, estimating a growth of 11.1% over the 2024-2025 revised estimates (RE) of Rs 38.53 trillion. Until November 2025, for which official data is available, the government received the GTRs of Rs 23.36 trillion, which is 55% less than the budgeted estimates (BEs).

The government made two big tax giveaways in 2025. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in her Budget speech, primarily to woo middle-class voters before the Delhi elections, made two big income tax concessions. Income tax on incomes up to Rs 12 lakh a year was effectively abolished, and tax rates for income slabs up to Rs 30 lakh were significantly reduced. On her own admission, these tax concessions – aimed at empowering the middle-class to boost consumption – were to cost Rs 1 trillion in income tax losses. Despite this fiscal concession of almost 8% of income-tax receipts, she naively believed that the receipts would grow by over 14% in 2025-2026 over the RE of Rs 12.57 trillion. Instead, income tax growth tanked. Till November, income-tax receipts, at Rs 7.48 trillion, grew by only 6.78%.

The second tax giveaway came out of the blue before the Bihar polls. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his Independence Day Speech, announced a 'double Diwali GST bonanza'. Following his announcement, the GST Council delivered a massive reduction in GST rates for hundreds of goods. The GST slab of 12% was abandoned, and goods subject to that were either exempted from GST or taken to the 5% slab. For many products of middle-class aspirations – cars, televisions, etc. – the tax went down from 28% to 18%. Despite this bonanza, the gross GST collections (including compensation cess) at Rs 5.46 trillion increased by only 0.52% in the October-December quarter.

The NSO's 2025-2026 advance GDP estimates, released on January 7, put consumption growth at only 7%, slower than the 7.2% seen in 2024-2025. Clearly, both the big tax cuts have failed to boost consumption while jolting government tax revenues.

A big shortfall

The situation is likely to become worse in the last quarter of 2025-2026 (January to March). The government is staring at a substantial reduction in estimated receipts of both income taxes and central GST receipts for 2025-2026.

Taking the income-tax collections in eight months (April to November) and the current trends, it will be imprudent to factor in a growth of more than 6% over the 2024-2025 provisional receipts of Rs 11.82 trillion. This leads to a 2025-2026 RE income tax of Rs 12.52 trillion – a loss of about Rs 1.85 trillion. The net GST (Rs 15.13 trillion) growth, after refunds, is only 4.7% at the end of December. The central GST receipts for 2025-2026 are, therefore, unlikely to exceed 5% over provisional receipts of Rs 10.26 trillion in 2024-2025. This gives GST receipts of Rs 10.77 trillion, which is another loss of about Rs 1 trillion.

Separately, analysts are pegging the profitability growth of the NSE50 companies between 2-4% for the December quarter, which is the lowest in the last six quarters. As corporate taxes have grown at about 7.8% in the first eight months and lower profit growth lies ahead, it will be safer to pencil in a growth of 7% over provisional receipts of Rs 9.87 trillion in 2024-2025, resulting in lesser receipts of Rs 25,000 crore. Overall, the government is staring at a shortfall of about Rs 3 trillion in gross tax collections in 2025-2026.

There are no major reasons or drivers to bring in marked optimism in tax growth for FY2027. The government is planning an overhaul of customs duties, which is unlikely to raise customs duty revenues. On the contrary, the adverse effects of GST rate cuts will continue to show up in 2026-2027. Learning from the experience, the government is unlikely to embark on another misadventure by further cutting corporate and personal income taxes or GST rates.

It will be prudent to assume a GTR growth of ₹7-8% for 2026-2027. As the 2025-2026 GTRs are expected to be Rs 39.7 trillion (i.e. Rs 42.7 trillion minus Rs 3 trillion), building in 8% growth, the government might be well advised to keep the 2026-2027 GTR estimates at Rs 42.9 trillion.

A longer version of the article is on www.deccanherald.com

(The writer is a former Finance and Economic Affairs Secretary)

Censorship or coercion? The politics around Vijay's *Jana Nayagan*

DATELINE Chennai

E T B SIVAPRIYAN

On January 9, Justice P T Asha of the Madras High Court directed the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) to issue an 'U/A 16+' certificate to *Jana Nayagan*, actor Vijay's cinematic swansong. Within minutes of the order, the CBFC rushed to the first bench of Chief Justice M M Shrivastava and Justice G Arul Murugan, seeking an urgent hearing and a stay on the single judge's order. The stay was granted.

On January 12, the CBFC filed a caveat in the Supreme Court of India seeking to be heard before passing orders on the appeal filed by KVN Productions against the division bench's order.

The controversy began earlier. After initially agreeing to issue a U/A certificate, the CBFC made a volte-face on January 5, referring the film to a revising committee. This prompted the producers to approach the High Court to secure the film's release on January 9 as scheduled.

The alacrity shown by the CBFC – the case in the High Court was argued by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta -- on *Jana Nayagan* has fuelled allegations of political interference. Critics have been quick to suggest that the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party at the Centre was behind the move to stall the film.

The legal battle over *Jana Nayagan* coincides with Vijay's questioning by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in New Delhi in connection with the Karur stampede case. The film's release was also timed perfectly to bolster the actor's political profile ahead of the electoral debut of his party, Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK), in the Assembly elections.

Trouble over film releases is not new for Vijay. His 2013 film *Thalaivaa* was stalled in Tamil Nadu while it was released in other markets; *Mersal* (2017) faced protests from the BJP over references to the GST; and *Sarkar* (2018) was forced to undergo cuts after censor clearance following objections from the AIADMK to several scenes and even the name of a character.

This, however, is the first time one of his movies has been stuck at the CBFC, with no clarity on when it will hit the theatres.

The stalling of the movie and the CBI inquiry come at a time when Vijay has reportedly rejected overtures from the BJP to join the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in Tamil Nadu to take on the DMK, especially after the Karur stampede, in which 41 people were killed. Critics, however, claim that Vijay has softened his stance towards the BJP since the incident. Vijay has previously described the BJP as his "ideological enemy" and the DMK as his "political enemy".

As Vijay faces trouble, the Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi—whose Congress party views the actor as an "anti-BJP" force and might not be averse to doing business with him in the future—framed the controversy as an attack on Tamil culture and directly accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of stalling the movie.

The DMK, too, questioned the BJP on the need for the CBI to summon Vijay to New Delhi, alleging that the move was intended to coerce him into joining the NDA. However, amid the political crossfire, Vijay has maintained a stoic silence, even as the spotlight on him intensifies.

Political analyst Maalan Narayanan believes the controversy surrounding the movie is 'apolitical' and sees the appeals by the CBFC only as the organisation's way of asserting itself and defending its decision to send *Jana Nayagan* to the revising committee.

"Even Vijay has not said this is politically motivated. It is only political parties like DMK and Congress who will be affected by Vijay's political entry who are making it political to create anti-BJP sentiments in Tamil Nadu. It is the DMK which is trying to politicise the issue," he added.

However, senior journalist R Bhagwan Singh feels the BJP may be using multiple agencies to pressure Vijay into aligning with the NDA.

"People are openly discussing the possibility of Vijay joining the NDA. And the truth is the whip is in the hands of the BJP. The AIADMK-BJP combine feels unless Vijay joins the NDA, they won't stand any chance against the DMK. That's why Vijay is being pressured," he told *DH*.

Narayanan felt the CBI questioning Vijay is aimed at ensuring that the Karur stampede becomes an election issue, with the BJP continuing to blame the lapses of the state government for the incident. "They want this to be used against the DMK. I think the CBI will come out with some kind of a report on the issue close to the elections to corner the DMK," he said.

Having opposed the BJP and even calling it an "ideological enemy", Vijay will find it extremely difficult to join the NDA, political analysts say, and they warn that such a decision has the potential to end his political career. Warming up to the NDA will ensure consolidation of the minorities towards the DMK, alienate TVK from "secular forces" and also from a section of the electorate who support Vijay for his novelty, they feel.

Singh said he was unsure whether Vijay would yield to the pulls and pressure exerted on him. "The point that the AIADMK-BJP makes here is that the end justifies the means, as Vijay also wants the DMK to be vanquished. But if Vijay continues to resist the pressure, he will not just gain sympathy but also people's trust," he added.

DHNS

Its security forces have brutally defended the Islamic Republic, but the protests show that many Iranians consider it stagnant and ideologically hollow

STEVEN ERLANGER

DH ILLUSTRATION: DEEPAK HARICHANDAN

With crackdown on protests, Iran's govt is only buying time

The protests in Iran against the Islamic Republic appear broader and more combative than ever before. The government crackdown is also more violent.

The regime and its 86-year-old supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, see the spreading protests as an existential threat, experts and analysts said, and they have responded with force to protect the government and their own institutional interests.

After the government's nearly 50 years in power, many in Iran have come to see it as having betrayed its promise of a better life for all Iranians. They have turned out in large numbers across the country demanding an end to the regime.

Though many would like these protests to overthrow the government, much as the shah of Iran was overthrown in 1979, there is a degree of wishful thinking involved, the analysts suggested. The government is likely to quash the current unrest, they said, even as the demonstrations expose popular discontent that may be impossible to suppress in the longer term.

"The regime felt an existential angst and brought down the iron fist, so I feel this round is probably done," Ali Vaez, Iran project director for the International Crisis Group, a research institution, said of the protests. "But since the regime can only suppress and not address the underlying causes, it is only buying time until the next round of confrontation between the state and society."

With the Internet blackout of Iran, it is hard to get a clear picture of the protests or a sense of the death toll. But public fury will persist, predicted Vali Nasr, an Iran expert at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in Washington. "The protests were extremely significant, and even if they dissipate, the anger that they produced has not gone away," he said in a briefing for the Quincy Institute, a Washington-based research organisation.

The wild card, as ever, is President Donald Trump. He has threatened to attack the Iranian government for its harsh crackdown on the protests and is said to be considering a range of options, from airstrikes to cyberattacks, having just proposed economic sanctions against companies dealing with Iran.

Yet Trump also appears to be interested in renewed negotiations with Iran, which could be an off-ramp for the government if it can secure some sanctions relief and help assuage some of the public outrage.

The protests show that many Iranians may now believe that the Islamic Revolution of 1979 has failed to address their everyday economic needs and has instead focused on extending its military might through its nuclear enrichment and proxy forces in the region.

At the same time, the government retains a monopoly on the use of force and has shown its willingness to use it to crush this challenge. The powerful Revolutionary Guard is constitutionally obligated to protect the Islamic Republic — its revolution, ideology and supreme leader — with political and theological foundations in the revolution that cast off Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi and his Westernizing, secular government.

And the corps also is deeply embedded in the economic system, including oil, defense and smuggling.

There have been no serious defections from the security services or the army to the opposition. The opposition remains divided, and it's not clear what kind of support it has. Among its aspiring leaders are Reza Pahlavi, the son of the former shah, who lives in exile.

His father left Iran for exile 47 years ago Friday, noted Sanam Vakil, director of the Middle East and North Africa program at Chatham House. That may be a rallying point for further protest and support for Pahlavi, who presents himself as an unlikely new leader of a different Iran.

During the revolution, the shah pulled back from using overwhelming force, the military and elite split, and there was a popular figure to head the opposition — Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini — who had a fervent following among both the clergy and the poor.

This time, the collapse of the rial currency — first gradually, then suddenly last month — prompted an outcry from the powerful merchant class. It quickly spread to thousands of Iranians who could no longer afford the basics of daily life. Iran's economy is subject to harsh sanctions imposed by much of the world over its nuclear program. The country is also running out of water.

At first, the government responded to the unrest with emollient words about listening to grievances and by firing the head of the Central Bank. When the moves did little to quell public anger, the regime shifted to violence and accusations of terrorism. Khamenei vowed to defend the revolution and accused the United States and Israel of instigating and paying for the protests.

Trump's threats to intervene appear to have only solidified the government's conviction that the demonstrations are a danger that needs to be extinguished. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people have been killed, according to rights groups and an Iranian health official.

"The radicalism among the protesters, and how quickly it has turned violent on both sides, is a testament to a bipolar country," said Ellie Geranmayeh, an Iran expert at the European Council on Foreign Relations. "The regime and the security services see this as an extension of the U.S.-Israeli war and feel they must go full force to get to the terrorists."

The June war and the protests seem to have reduced previous tensions between the Revolutionary Guard and the military, she said.

If the regime may not be ending, the Islamic Revolution appears to have run its course. After nearly 50 years, its efforts to spread revolt through the Middle East have failed, and a new generation has different aims and less of a willingness to live by strict Islamic laws that the elite violate.

The new threats from Washington prompted Iranian officials to say they would like to renew and intensify their on-again, off-again talks with U.S. officials about Iran's nuclear program and the protests.

Though difficult politically, if Iran were to finally agree to stop enriching uranium under international monitoring — after the bombings of last summer, it no longer seems to be enriching in any case — then Trump would likely respond by lifting some important economic sanctions, Vakil said. The government could present that outcome to Iranians as economic progress.

There is also the question of the future of Khamenei, who has been unwilling to make tough decisions for change. Geranmayeh predicted that the protests will intensify any debate over his role.

Succession is coming regardless, given the ayatollah's age. "The odds of regime transformation are much higher than of regime change," Vaez said.

Meanwhile, a hemisphere away, the installment of the vice president of Venezuela, Delcy Rodríguez, as its leader after the United States seized President Nicolás Maduro demonstrates that Washington is willing to live with the same structure if it has a different head, he noted.

Sustainable reform in Iran ultimately requires a bargain with Washington, Geranmayeh said.

"Even if these protests ultimately lead to a new power structure, only a comprehensive deal with Washington will remove the constant shadow of war and sanctions under which too many generations of Iranians have lived."

Iran's unrest underscores a paradox that has long defined the Islamic Republic: a state strong enough to crush dissent in the short term, yet too rigid to resolve the grievances that repeatedly fuel it. The current protests may ebb under repression, but they have further eroded the moral and political legitimacy of a revolution already hollowed out by economic failure, social control and generational change. As succession looms and external pressure mounts, the regime faces a narrowing set of choices — cosmetic adjustments, negotiated relief with Washington, or deeper coercion. None promises stability. What is certain is that the gulf between state and society has widened, making confrontation not an aberration, but an enduring feature of Iran's future.

The New York Times

India's shift from anchors to influencers

ISHAYU GUPTA AND NEELATPHAL CHANDA

'Whoever controls the media, controls the mind.' –Jim Morrison

A silent yet radical transformation of India's media ecosystem is under way. Television news continues to dominate primetime ratings, but its grip on public discourse is weakening, slowly yet surely. In its place, digital influencers are emerging as key actors in public communication, often with explicit institutional endorsement. This is not merely a new outreach strategy; it marks a deeper reconfiguration of how credibility, visibility, and authority are created in India's digital public sphere.

For decades, the news anchor served as an intermediary between the State and the citizen. Anchors framed political narratives, facilitated debate, and, at least nominally, held power to account. Today, that model appears exhausted. Public distrust, politics of ideology, performative debates and spectacle-driven formats have pushed audiences away. Influencers, by contrast, thrive within the logic of digital platforms, where attention, authenticity, and affect matter more than institutional authority.

Government collaboration with influencers signals a decisive shift. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting's campaigns—such as *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav* and *WAVES* (World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit)—demonstrate that influencer-led communication is strategic rather than incidental. The Ministry of Tourism's *Dekho Apna Desh* campaign has relied heavily on travel and lifestyle influencers to promote domestic tourism, generating greater traction on national news media coverage. During and after the Covid-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare similarly partnered with fitness influencers, Instagram doctors and regional creators to disseminate behavioural guidelines.

What the State is leveraging here is not merely reach, but legitimacy. As attention shifts from scheduled broadcasts to personalised feeds, the State understands that the key to communication has little to do with the media and everything to do with algorithms. Influencers offer access to demographically and linguistically specific audiences that traditional news outlets struggle to reach.

This shift should not be read as the simple decline of journalism. Rather, it reflects a structural shift of journalism from State-media relations to platform-driven media culture. Public discourse is now shaped by infrastructures that no longer depend on journalistic norms for the co-construction of reality.

Influencers succeed where television news anchors falter for three key reasons. First, they are native to platform logics. Their content is designed for brevity, emotion and immediacy. Unlike television anchors bound by newsroom hierarchies and rigid formats, influencers communicate in a language perceived as authentic—even when messages are scripted or aligned with government communications. Regional creators on YouTube, in languages such as Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, or Bengali, have been particularly effective.

Second, influencers benefit from a paradox of credence. At a time when institutional media faces widespread scepticism, the very absence of overt institutional affiliation lends their messages greater trust. A lifestyle YouTuber promoting a government cleanliness drive, or an investment influencer explaining digital payments under the Digital India initiative, may appear more believable than a television correspondent delivering the same message.

Third, influencers blur the boundary between the private and the political. Public messaging is embedded within stories about everyday life—such as travel vlogs showcasing tourist destinations, fitness channels endorsing health initiatives or financial bloggers normalising digital transactions. While this enhances the transparency of governance communication, it also reduces opportunities for critical scrutiny.

This transformation, however, creates an imperative concerning democratic accountability. Influencers operate outside the ethical frameworks that govern journalism. Additionally, disclosure norms for institutional ties remain weak, and regulatory oversight is limited. The public is rarely informed about the terms under which influencers engage with public institutions. Algorithmic biases further amplify certain identities, languages and urbanities, while marginalising others.

The question, therefore, is not whether influencers should be part of public communication, but on what terms. A democratic media ecosystem requires transparency about power, sponsorship, and intent. The challenge ahead involves striking a balance between reach and responsibility, while also fostering innovation and promoting democratic accountability. This is particularly important given the shift from traditional newsrooms to personal feeds, which is changing the discourse in India.

(Ishayu is with the School of Media and Communication, University of Leeds, UK, and Neelatphal is a faculty member in the Department of Media Studies, Christ University)

OUR PAGES OF HISTORY

50 YEARS AGO: JANUARY 1976

DMK Govt evading responsibility: PM

Madras, January 14
Prime Minister Indira Gandhi today accused the ruling DMK in Tamil Nadu of going out of their way to blame the Centre and trying to evade responsibility for their own acts of commission and omission. Addressing Congress workers here, Mrs. Gandhi quoted figures to challenge Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi's claim that the State's Plan and development expenditure had been substantial and that its actual per capita Plan outlay was higher than the figure decided on the basis of approved outlay.

25 YEARS AGO: JANUARY 2001

Farooq Abdullah survives grenade attack

Srinagar, Jan 14
Chief Minister Dr Farooq Abdullah escaped a bid on his life in the old city Habakadal locality when militants fired two grenades towards the public meeting he was addressing. He crawled to a blind lane where he laid prostrate for sometime with his security encircling him. After the order was restored and the people were encouraged to return, Dr Abdullah said he will not be cowed down by bullets and bombs. "Nothing will deter me from the path of restoring normalcy in the state", he said.

OASIS | SUDHA DEVI NAYAK

On living the examined life

Life is full of questions about right and wrong and good and bad that stalk our conscience throughout our brief sojourn on this earth. The important questions are not those we ask of the world but of ourselves, the questions that prompt us to look inwards and embark on a journey of interrogation and self-exploration.

The essence of self-enquiry and the importance of personal reflection heightens our understanding of ourselves and the world around us. While external queries and pursuit of knowledge are important, the questions that prompt us to look inwards are crucial for understanding our beliefs and motivation and an awareness that makes for meaningful choices and a fulfilled life.

Socrates was philosophy's patron saint. The King of the Question. To him "the unexamined life was not worth living". He was forever asking questions and eliciting answers, an unsparing auditor who held people accountable for their beliefs and lives. We must question our existence, our purposes, our values, our decisions and the moral and ethical dimensions of our actions, which would result in increased self-awareness, better emotional intelligence and improved mental health.

Through self-dialogue, we can confront our fears and doubts, understand our desires and look at our goals with more clarity. Socrates believed all wisdom starts with wonder, and in the childlike wonder where a child has a million questions, we need to ask and answer our own questions to become better individuals. Why am I doing what I am doing?

As Ovid says, "In all creation nothing endures; all is in endless flux," and today's certainties may well be tomorrow's misgivings. To see things in the proper perspective, we need to examine the right and wrong of our intended actions before we embark on them. Many times we may be proved wrong, but that would only teach us to be more circumspect or thoughtful the next time round and be more accountable for our actions.

When Socrates was sentenced to death by an Athenian court on charges of impiety and corrupting the youth around him, he left us with a question. "The hour of departure has arrived, and we go our ways – I to die and you to live. Which is better? God only knows."

Zubeen Garg was drunk, declined life jacket, Singapore court told

'Several witnesses saw singer trying to swim back to the yacht when he went limp'

SINGAPORE, PTI

Indian singer-songwriter Zubeen Garg was "severely intoxicated" and had drowned off Lazarus Island after declining a life jacket last September, a coroner's court in Singapore was told on Wednesday.

Garg (52) was at a yacht party when he died of drowning a day before he was slated to perform at the North East India Festival in Singapore.

Zubeen Garg

The singer initially wore a life jacket but removed it and later declined to put on a second one offered to him, the chief investigating officer told the court, *Channel News Asia* reported.

At the time, Garg was also severely intoxicated, and several witnesses saw him trying to swim back to the yacht when he went limp and began floating with his face in the water, the Channel said, quoting the officer.

Garg was promptly rescued back to the yacht, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) was administered to him, but he was pronounced dead later that same day.

A total of 35 witnesses are slated for the inquiry, including witnesses on the yacht, the boat captain, police officers, and paramedics.

The chief investigating officer told the court that Garg and 20-odd people on the yacht, including his friends and colleagues, had some snacks, drinks and alcohol on the boat.

Several witnesses said they saw Garg drinking alcohol, with one witness saying he had consumed a few cups of liquor, gin and whisky, along with a few sips of Guinness Stout.

The investigating officer said that during the first swim, Garg removed his life jacket and later went back on the yacht and was heard saying that he was tired. "When he decided to resume swimming, Garg was offered a second, smaller life jacket, but he declined to wear it. He entered the water without a life jacket and started swimming in the direction of Lazarus Island alone," the officer said.

An autopsy determined the cause of death to be drowning. Some injuries were found on his body, but they were found to have been sustained during CPR and rescue efforts, the Channel report said.

A toxicology analysis found that he had a blood alcohol concentration of 333 milligrams per 100ml of blood, which suggests severe intoxication resulting in impaired coordination and reflexes, the court was told. The legal limit in Singapore is 80 milligrams per 100ml of blood.

Bengal: 2 more nurses with Nipah symptoms hospitalised

KOLKATA, DHNS: Two healthcare workers were admitted to the Beliaghata ID Hospital here after they showed symptoms of the Nipah virus infection, a health department official said.

Their blood and urine samples, and throat and nasal swabs, have been sent for tests.

The two workers had examined one of the infected nurses at Burdwan Medical College and Hospital and were brought to the Infectious Diseases Hospital and Beleghata General Hospital in Kolkata on Tuesday and Wednesday, respectively.

Even as the condition of the two nurses infected with the Nipah virus remained critical, officials had so far identified at least 48 others who came into contact with them and started monitoring their health.

Another doctor, who had come into contact with one of the two infected nurses, was placed under isolation, but he tested negative, officials of the health department said.

Two nurses of a hospital at Barasat on the outskirts of Kolkata, tested positive for the Nipah virus on Monday. They had recently visited the Purba Bardhaman district. Both are now in a very critical condition and have been put on artificial respiration.

The Centre and the state government are in touch to contain the outbreak, the officials said.

Kerala govt faces backlash for raising prisoners' wages

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS

The Kerala government's recent hike in prisoner wages has sparked a controversy.

Critics stated that the increase in jail wages could lead to a rise in crime in the state, and the revised pay is higher than that in many key sectors.

Government sources justified the hike, citing that the wages for prisoners are higher in many other states like Karnataka. The wage revision was also effected after some prisoners approached the court, sources said.

While the daily wages of unskilled workers increased to Rs 530 from Rs 63, the wages of semi-skilled workers increased to Rs 560 from Rs 127, and those of skilled workers increased to Rs 620 from Rs 168.

Prisoners of two open prisons who are engaged in work like rubber tapping will also be entitled to incentives. On average, prisoners would be able to earn Rs 15,000 to Rs 19,000.

There are also widespread allegations of malpractices in allowing parole to prisoners, especially those involved in political crimes. At present, there are around 4,000 convicts in Kerala prisons.

While Congress leader K Muraleedharan stated that the government was showing priority towards the welfare of criminals even when those working for the government were not being paid properly, National Janata Dal criticised said the steep increase could lead to an increase in crime.

There are also criticisms that ASHA workers, who were on a major stir in Kerala seeking a wage hike, are only receiving remuneration of Rs 220 daily.

Minimum wages of many traditional sectors and those working under various schemes are also comparatively lower than the wages of prisoners.

Sources stated that ASHA workers are doing voluntary service.

Manipur: Kuki-Zo urges Amit Shah to expedite talks for political solution

SUMIR KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI, DHNS

A day after Kuki MLAs served a 2027 deadline for fulfilling the demand for a Union Territory, Kuki organisations in Manipur on Wednesday staged massive rallies at several places and urged the Centre to expedite talks with the insurgent groups for a 'political solution' to the ongoing conflict.

After the rally in Churachandpur, the Kuki-Zo Council (KZC) submitted a memorandum addressed to Home Minister Amit Shah and urged him to expediting talks with the Kuki National Organisation (KNO) and United Peoples Front (UPF) for an immediate political solution.

"Kuki-Zo people cannot and will not return to Imphal or accept a restoration of the pre-conflict status quo....the Kuki-Zo people have formally placed before the Government of India our legitimate and constitutional demand for a Separate Administration in the form of a Union Territory with Legislature under Article 239A of the Indian Constitution. While political talks with the Kuki-Zo representatives -KNO–UPF have commenced, there has been no visible or tangible progress, prolonging uncertainty and hardships," the KZC said.

The KZC also raised objections to the reported move by the administration for the resettlement of the displaced Meiteis in their villages close to the Churachandpur district.

This came two days after displaced Meiteis and members of COCOMI, an Imphal-based forum of civil society groups in Manipur, staged a protest in Imphal demanding steps for resettlement. They also met Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla with the same demand.

Manipur has remained under President's Rule since February last year.

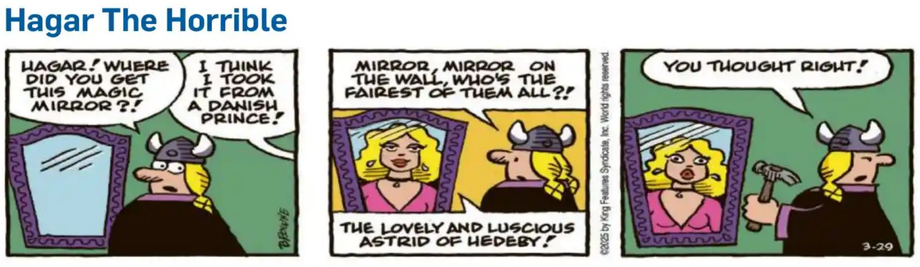
MISCELLANY

◆ COMICS ◆

Blondie

NEW...FROM THE PEOPLE WHO BROUGHT YOU "THE PRICE IS RIGHT," IT'S... "THE WIFE IS RIGHT"
WHAT?
HUH?
CLICK
ONE LUCKY HUSBAND WILL GUESS WHY HIS WIFE IS RIGHT AND MAYBE WIN A BRAND-NEW CAR!!
10-7
WAIT, HONEY! I WANT TO RECORD SEASON ONE!!
THIS IS GONNA BE A LONG SEASON

Hagar The Horrible


HAGAR! WHERE DID YOU GET THIS MAGIC MIRROR?!
I THINK I TOOK IT FROM A DANISH PRINCE!
MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL, WHO'S THE FAIREST OF THEM ALL?!
THE LOVELY AND LUSCIOUS ASTRID OF HEDEBY!
YOU THOUGHT RIGHT!
3-29

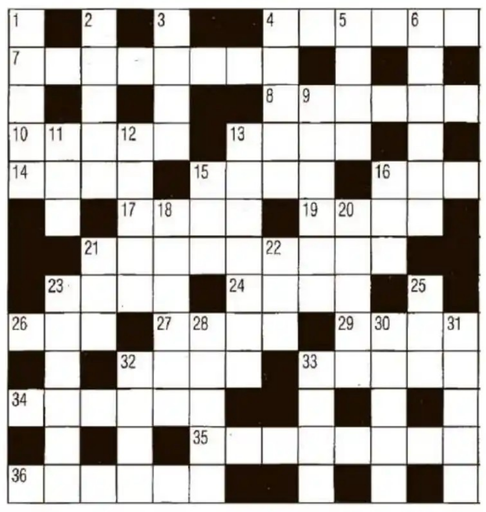
Beetle Bailey

Peanuts

LET'S JUST SAY THAT LIFE HAS ME BEATEN...
SO I GIVE UP! I ADMIT THAT THERE'S NO WAY I CAN WIN...
WHAT IS IT YOU WANT, CHARLIE BROWN?
HOW ABOUT TWO OUT OF THREE?

Marvin

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 12332



CRYPTIC

ACROSS
4 The sort to give a turn to a key? (6)
7 Race loser who got the gold (8)
8 They're good to sing, giving some chaps charity (6)
10 At many joints, they go with everything (5)
13 Music for quiet operations (4)
14 The cachalot has one, so has a saint (4)
15 Sound displeased with a redhead, the rotter! (4)
16 Animal engaged in eating nuts (3)
17 Frighten away from Soho? (4)
19 Osiris's one little sister? (4)
21 To be accurate, insensitive to what's proper? (4,5)
23 A shocking act? (4)
24 Chelsea girl, familiarly? (4)
26 Sorry for Sadie's loss, that is (3)
27 Chap finishing work on a piece of furniture (4)
29 In the Netherlands, a key barrier (4)
32 In which life lacks ups and downs? (4)
33 A lame dog may have trouble with it (5)
34 A learner tells fibs to friends (6)
35 Possessing riches, able to dish dole out for Dora (8)
36 Hardly the sort of suite for Darby and Joan (6)

DOWN
1 Look like a well balanced game (5)
2 Quibble about some clavier composition (5)
3 Headgear for going up in space (4)
4 "No more", as Tommy Atkins used to say (5)
5 Beverages said to tantalise (4)
6 They built villas and organised manors (6)
9 Minor branches (6)
11 Part of the Thames near Richmond (3)
12 Problem that confused Rose, on the quiet (5)
13 Like the worst workmanship, or a letter in the post (7)
15 Though nameless, is certainly somebody (3)
16 Contemptible contributor to the travelling itinerary (3)
18 One possibly held out can be grasped (6)
20 The goalie likes a clean one (5)
21 It's no good stealing a note from a dude (3)
22 Usually of that sort (3)
23 He has a job bringing a poor piece to an end (6)
25 One who'd wash up for a chum (3)
28 Stand under canvas (5)
30 Four-legged supporter in Division One? (5)
31 It's nice to eat with water (5)
32 The discovery of Clive of India (4)
33 Old chimney lining (4)

ACROSS
4 Tempt (6)
7 Screen test (8)
8 Rue (6)
10 Adjoins (5)
13 Male children (4)
14 Former monetary unit (4)
15 Native of Poland (4)
16 Racket (3)
17 Puddle (4)
19 Twelve inches (4)
21 Serve this with lamb (4,5)
23 Knitting stitch (4)
24 Roof slab (4)
26 Farm animal (3)
27 Finished (4)
29 Very keen (4)
32 Just, impartial (4)
33 Shoot from cover (5)
34 Cleans feathers (6)
35 Event (8)
36 Piece of small shot (6)

DOWN
1 Lethal (5)
2 Distinctive smell (5)
3 Boy's name (4)
4 Become a member (5)
5 Towboats (4)
6 Belief (6)
9 View or glance (6)
11 Large (3)
12. Long-snouted mammal (5)
13 Support, reinforce (7)
15 Container (3)
16 Female deer (3)
18 Lent out (2,4)
20 Large sea (5)
21 Drinking vessel (3)
22 Ventilate (3)
23 Penetrate (6)
25 Fastening device (3)
28 Call on (5)
30 Female fox (5)
31 End of life (5)
32 Perceive by touching (4)
33 Leg part (4)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 12331

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 1, Serbia 7, Gertrude 8, Ma-k-e 10, So-aked 11, In-dict 14, Me-n 16, Del-ay 17, N-ear 19, Get in 21, Pylon 22, Na-pp-y 23, Bart. 26, Hotel 28, W-O-N 29, Elat-ed. 30, Matter 31, Ughs 32, Trim-Ming 33, Street.
DOWN: 1, Season 2, Be-ak-er 3, Aged 4, Stand-in 5, Pupil 6, Testy 8, MA-MA 9, Ken 12, Den 13, Caver 15, He-LPs 18, Ex-tol 19, Gyp 20, Toy 21, Paler-MO 22, Net 23, B-other 24, Ants 25, Tur-B-ot 26, Heath 27, Tax-is 28, Wag 30, Mugs.

EASY
ACROSS: 1, Tribal 7, Escalate 8, Fuss 10, States 11, Notice 14, Dew 16, Nasal 17, Loss 19, Cater 21, Nonet 22, Go bad 23, Lees 26, Idiom 28, Boa 29, Sordid 30, Secret 31, Heal 32, Unstable 33, Deepen.
DOWN: 1, Tinsel 2, Brutes 3, Less 4, Bayonet 5, Basis 6, Jewel 8, Fads 9, Sew 12, Tar 13, Canoe 15, Banal 18, Outdo 19, Cob 20, Ted 21, Nominal 22, God 23, Locate 24, Earl 25, Saturn 26, Issue 27, Irish 28, Bee 30, Shed.

◆SU-DO-KU-6804◆

		8			6	2		
6				4				5
7				2			6	
					7		5	
2	5						8	7
	7		1					
	9			3				4
1				7				8
		2	4			6		

hard

SOLUTION TO 6803

2	4	9	5	6	3	1	8	7
8	6	7	1	2	4	5	9	3
3	5	1	7	9	8	2	4	6
5	8	2	9	3	7	4	6	1
9	3	6	4	1	5	7	2	8
7	1	4	6	8	2	3	5	9
1	2	8	3	4	9	6	7	5
6	9	5	2	7	1	8	3	4
4	7	3	8	5	6	9	1	2

To solve the puzzle: To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

SCRABBLE™

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							Triple Word Score	RACK 1
E1	E1	T1	E1	S1	W4	I1		
							Triple Word Score	RACK 2
E1	E1	S1	L1	T1	F4	T1		
							Triple Word Score	RACK 3
P3	E1	P3	S1	R1	A1	A1		
							Triple Word Score	RACK 4
E1	C3	T1	P3	R1	S1	A1		

PAR SCORE 215-225
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

L1	A1	T1	R1	I1	N1	E1	RACK 1 =	57
N1	O1	N1	F4	O1	O1	D2	RACK 2 =	63
C3	H4	E1	R1	O1	O1	T1	RACK 3 =	62
P3	A1	E1	L1	L1	A1		RACK 4 =	16
							JUDD'S TOTAL	198

PAR SCORE 130-140

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

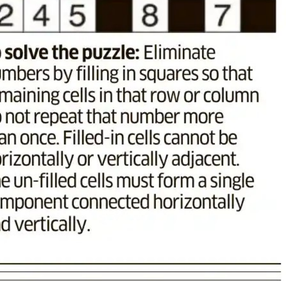
Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

MSOTP

VADIO

HRCEWN

SUJDTA


C'mon- mankind is waiting. Let's plant some footprints!
Wait. We have procedures to follow.
7/7
ONCE THE "EAGLE" HAD LANDED, AN ANXIOUS BUZZ ALDRIN WANTED NEIL ARMSTRONG TO ---

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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print your answer here: _____ _____ _____ (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: TWIRL WHOSE SHROUD SALARY
Answer: His claim that he could eat one of the hot dogs in just two bites was — HARD TO SWALLOW

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HITORI-3258

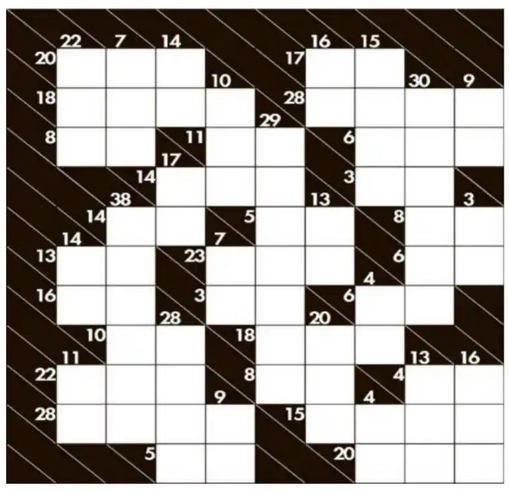
2	5	2	7	4	6	8	2
1	1	2	2	5	2	6	7
4	7	8	1	7	2	7	3
8	7	2	2	1	2	4	6
7	4	7	7	8	3	5	2
6	7	5	4	2	5	7	1
5	8	3	6	8	7	8	2
8	2	2	5	6	4	1	4

SOLUTION TO 3257

6	■	8	2	■	7	4	■
1	8	■	7	3	4	■	2
■	1	6	5	2	■	8	7
3	7	■	1	■	5	■	8
4	■	2	■	7	8	5	1
8	2	1	4	6	■	3	■
■	3	7	8	5	6	2	4
2	4	5	■	8	■	7	■

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

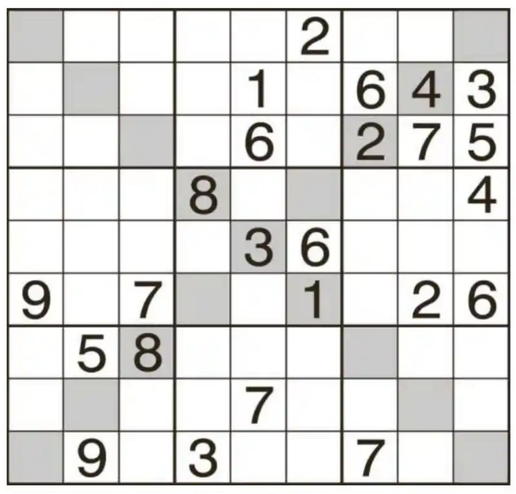
KAKURO- 3258



SOLUTION TO 3257

To solve the puzzle: Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

SU DO KU X - 3797



SOLUTION TO 3796

9	6	5	3	4	8	2	1	7
8	7	3	1	2	9	6	5	4
4	1	2	5	6	7	8	3	9
1	8	7	4	5	2	3	9	6
5	3	9	8	1	6	4	7	2
6	2	4	9	7	3	1	8	5
7	9	6	2	8	1	5	4	3
2	4	8	7	3	5	9	6	1
3	5	1	6	9	4	7	2	8

To solve the puzzle: The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

HC upholds 'bodily freedom' in marriage

Denies bail to bizman accused of sexually abusing wife

SATISH JHA
AHMEDABAD, DHNS

COURT ON CONSENT

- Court says intimacy must be consensual and respectful
- Unnatural sex against spouse's will causes physical, mental trauma, says order
- HC notes women rarely confront such issues publicly unless abuse exceeds tolerance
- Points to similar allegations by first wife, calls petitioner 'repeat offender'

Holding that the modern legal framework has begun to recognise an individual's "bodily freedom" even within marriages traditionally viewed as an "automatic grant of sexual consent", the Gujarat High Court refused anticipatory bail to a Gurugram-based businessman accused of mentally and sexually abusing his wife.

"Marriage has for decades been seen as an automatic grant of sexual consent. However, modern legal frameworks increasingly recognise the bodily freedom of an individual, even within a marital relationship," Justice Divyesh A Joshi observed in the order passed on January 5.

Intimacy is normal between married couples; however, it must be a consensual and mutually respectful act. When any spouse engages in unnatural sex against the will and wish of the other partner, it not only causes immense physical pain but also inflicts mental and emotional trauma on the non-consenting spouse, Justice Joshi wrote.

The order further said, "We do understand that no woman in our civilised and cultured society would come forward to confront such sensitive issues in public unless the level of harassment and abuse has gone beyond her tolerance."

The court made the observations while rejecting the anticipatory bail plea of an influential businessman from Gurugram, whose estranged wife has lodged an FIR.

The court refused to grant him any relief from arrest, holding that the alleged charges of physical and sexual assault were "quite grave in nature". It noted that the petitioner's first wife had made similar allegations.

The petitioner's lawyers described him as "a business tycoon and multi-millionaire", saying that the allegations were "vague". They also described the complainant as a law graduate and a chartered accountant, contending that she was never under threat or held against her will.

The court, however, said this was not a "simple case of matrimonial dispute".

UGC mandates 'Equity Committees' to curb campus bias

Issues fresh rules to tackle caste, gender discrimination in institutions

NEW DELHI, DHNS

GUARDING EQUALITY

- Move aimed at eliminating bias based on religion, gender, caste or disability
- Institutions barred from condoning discrimination; campus heads to be held responsible for compliance
- Mandatory representation of OBCs, persons with disabilities and women

The University Grants Commission (UGC), through its newly notified regulations, has mandated the formation of 'Equity Committees' in higher education institutions to address and prevent discrimination on campuses.

The Centre said that the move aims to eradicate discrimination on the basis of religion, race, gender, place of birth, caste or disability, particularly against members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, socially and educationally backward classes, economically weaker sections, and persons with disabilities.

In September, the Supreme Court directed the UGC to consider a 10-point framework on caste bias in higher education and set a timeline of eight weeks, while hearing a plea filed by the mothers of Rohith Vemula and Payal Tadvi—both students who died by suicide after facing discrimination. The petitioners had questioned the implementation of the 2012 UGC regulations.

In its notification, the UGC said that no higher education institution shall permit or condone any form of discrimination, and that it is the responsibility of the head of the institution to ensure strict adherence to these regulations. The notification directed colleges and universities to establish an Equal Opportunity Centre to oversee the effective implementation of policies. The centre must coordinate with civil society, local media, police, district administration, NGOs, as well as the District Legal Services Authority and the State Legal Services Authority.

The Equal Opportunity Centre must have an Equity Committee chaired by the head of the institution, with three faculty members, one non-teaching staff member, two representatives from civil society, and two students as members. The committee must ensure representation of Other Backward Classes, persons with disabilities, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and women. It must meet at least twice a year, maintain a portal for complaints, among other duties.

The notification also mandates that every higher education institution establish and operate an 'Equity Helpline' that will function round the clock.

Rahul citizenship case verdict on January 28

LUCKNOW, DHNS: An MP/MLA court hearing a plea claiming that the Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, was a British citizen would pronounce its verdict in the matter on January 28.

Rahul Gandhi

Special Judge Alok Verma reserved his verdict after the hearing concluded on Wednesday and set January 28 for the judgment.

A Karnataka resident, Vignesh Shishir, has filed a petition in the court contending that Rahul was a British citizen. He claimed that he was in possession of documents which supported his contention.

The petitioner has also sought registration of an FIR against Rahul under various sections of the IPC and the Official Secrets Act 1923, as well as revocation of his Indian citizenship.

The court took on record 45 annexures, some documents and a sealed envelope. Petitioner Vignesh was present during the hearing of the matter.

'Manjha' turns kite-flying season deadly, claims 3 lives

HYDERABAD/JAUNPUR/BIDAR, PTI

INVISIBLE DANGER

- Glass-coated nylon thread is sharp enough to slice skin, muscles and blood vessels – doctors compare it to a knife.
- The transparent, light-coloured thread is hard to spot on roads, making riders and pedestrians highly vulnerable.
- Victims have suffered deep neck cuts, severed tendons and massive blood loss, requiring emergency surgeries.
- Despite a government ban, Chinese manjha is still being made and sold illegally, doctors say.
- Injuries spike around Makar Sankranti (Jan) and Independence Day (Aug) when kite-flying is at its peak.

Three men in separate incidents in Karnataka, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh lost their lives on Wednesday after their throats were slit by kite strings while riding motorcycles, once again underlining the deadly threat posed by sharp manjha threads ahead of the Makar Sankranti kite-flying season.

In Telangana, a 38-year-old farm labourer from Uttar Pradesh died in Sangareddy district while he was riding a two-wheeler in Fasalwadi village on his way to buy vegetables.

The string reportedly entangled the man's neck, causing a deep cut and severe bleeding. He was rushed to a hospital but succumbed to his injuries.

A case has been registered, and investigations are ongoing. A police official and another person, reportedly sustained injuries in separate incidents in the city over the past few days after kite strings cut their throats.

Over the past month, police have registered more than 100 cases, seized the banned item, and arrested those involved in its sale.

In Uttar Pradesh, a physiotherapist died in Jaunpur after his throat was slit by a stray 'Chinese manjha' while he was returning home on his motorcycle.

The deceased, Mohammad Shamir, had come to Jaunpur district headquarters to meet a doctor. When he was riding on a road near the school, he got entangled in a Chinese manjha, which caused a severe cut to his neck. He succumbed to his injuries at the district hospital.

In Karnataka, a man was killed after a kite string slit his throat in Bidar. A ground glass-laced kite string hanging across the road got entangled around Hosamani's neck while he was riding his motorcycle. The string slit his throat, causing him to fall on the road and bleed heavily. He died on the spot.

On Tuesday, a youth was critically injured in Odisha's Bhubaneswar when he was travelling on a scooter and came in contact with a sharp kite string.

On Monday, the Indore bench of the Madhya Pradesh High Court said that if a minor is found flying a kite using the banned string, his guardians can be held legally responsible.

In the past one-and-a-half months, a 16-year-old boy and a 45-year-old man had died in separate incidents in Indore after their throats were allegedly slit by Chinese manja.

Stir in Varanasi as videos show damage to Manikarnika Ghat

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

Alleged demolitions at the iconic Manikarnika Ghat, which is one of the oldest among the 84 ghats on the Ganga, and damage to the centuries-old statue of Devi Ahilyabai Holker triggered widespread protests by the locals, who said that Kashi's (old name of Varanasi) heritage was being damaged in the name of renovation and development.

Members of the Pal and Maratha communities staged demonstrations at the Manikarnika Ghat and demanded a halt to the development works there.

According to Hindu mythology, cremation of the dead bodies at Manikarnika Ghat grants salvation. The people wait for hours to cremate the bodies there.

The protests erupted when a few videos showing a damaged statue of Devi Ahilyabai Holker, the Indore-based queen who had built the Manikarnika Ghat in 1771 and later got it renovated in 1791, went viral on social media. The videos also purportedly showed some damaged idols.

The videos claimed that Kahi's heritage was being demolished in the name of development. A group of locals reached the ghat and registered their protest.

One resident said that a 300-year-old 'Mani' (a stone structure) was also removed from the ghat.

A member of the Pal community said that all the idols and statues must be preserved.

The district administration, however, refuted the claims and said that the ghat was being renovated and that all the idols and statues were being preserved and would be reinstalled at their original places once the work was complete.

Sub-divisional magistrate Alok Verma said that there was some 'misunderstanding' over the renovation work, which led to the confusion. "Prima facie it appears that the protests were the handiwork of some outside elements...the locals are not opposing the work which is being done in their presence," he added.

Sources said that the ghat was being renovated. The development project includes the construction of two community toilets, a green area, 32 cremation platforms, a registration room, a wood storage facility, and waiting rooms.

UP Congress chief Ajai Rai accused the state government of 'demolishing' the heritage of Kashi on the pretext of renovation.

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REST OF KARNATAKA: CHANNARAYAPATNA: B. M Road, Ph: 99001 14111. DODDABALLAPUR: Talulk Office Road, Ph: 99000 46923. HOSAKOTE: Next to Chemmanur, Ph: 91081 57999. KOLAR: Opp Honda, Ph: 99001 09852. RAMANAGARA: Near Izoor P Stn., Ph: 99000 98795. TUMKUR: Opp. SIT, Batwadi, Ph: 91086 71999. TIPTUR: BH Road, Ph: 91081 38999. CHITRADURGA: Vasavi Mahal Road, Ph: 99722 78761. CHELLAKERE Opp. KSRTC Bus Stand. Ph: 99721 97481. HIRIYUR: Near Taluka Office, Ph: 99028 26470. SHIVAMOGGA: MR Complex, Next to Deepak Petrol Pump, Ph: 99000 12728. KADUR: Bhandari Com,plex, Opp.. LIC of India, Ph: 99002 19111. HASSAN: Next to Unity Scans, Ph: 99000 32414. MYSORE: KUVEMUNAGAR: Opp. NalPak Hotel, Ph: 82967 72073. VIJAYANAGAR: Opp. Bata Showroom, Ph: 76195 55538. DR. RAJKUMAR ROAD: Triveni Circle, Old RTO, Ph: 99000 09681, MANDYA: Vidyanagar, Near Vijaya Bank, Ph: 99001 17360. MULABAGAL: Opp. First Grade College, Ph: 99000 46949
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Some personnel ordered to leave US base in Qatar amid regional tensions

US embassy in Saudi Arabia asks personnel to exercise 'increased caution'

DOHA/RIYADH, AFP

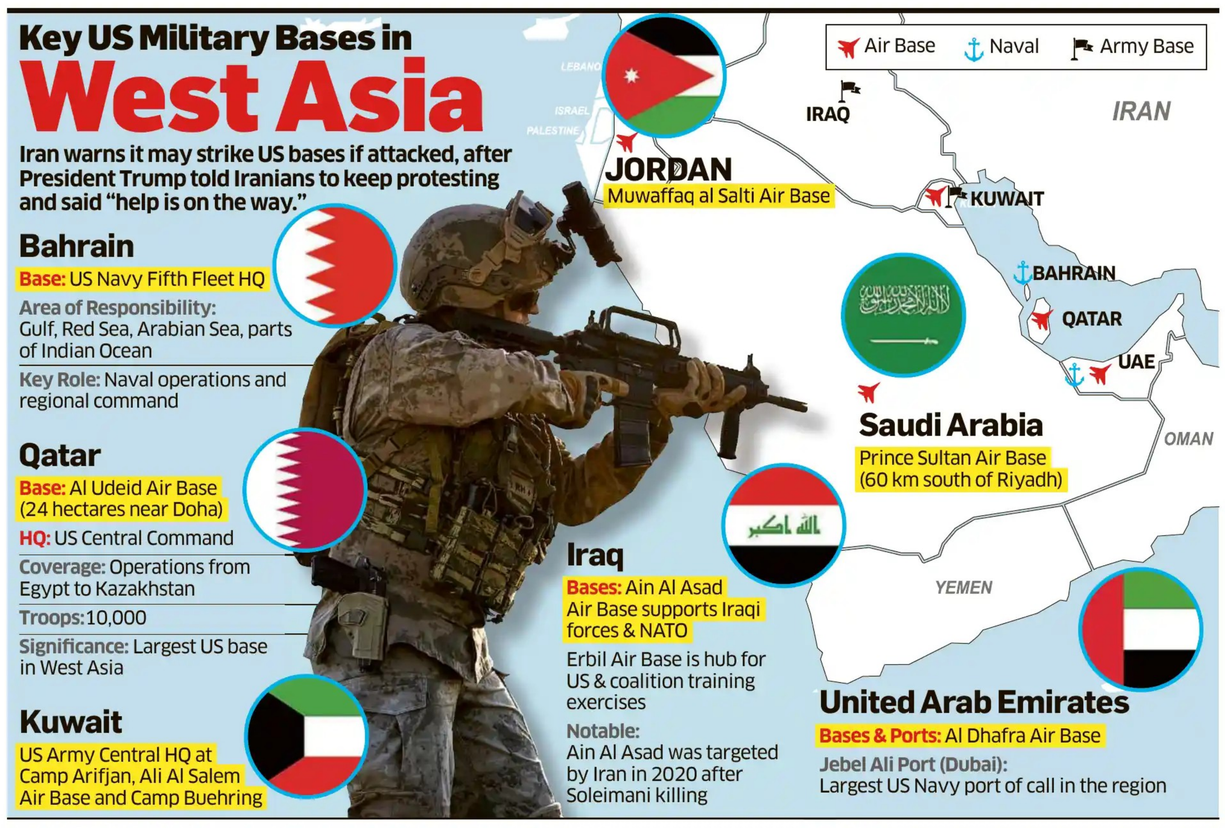
Some personnel have been asked to depart the United States' Al Udeid military base in Qatar amid rising regional tensions, two diplomatic sources told AFP on Wednesday, as Washington warned it could respond to Iran's violent crackdown on protests.

Qatar's International Media Office said the move was taken "in response to the current regional tensions", adding that Doha was implementing all necessary measures to protect critical infrastructure and military facilities. A diplomatic source said a number of personnel were asked to leave the base by Wednesday evening, a detail confirmed by a second source speaking on condition of anonymity. The US embassy in Qatar declined to comment.

The precautionary step comes as Tehran warned it would strike US military and shipping assets if attacked, following threats from US President Donald Trump to act against Iran if it executes protesters. Iranian officials have dismissed it as a "pretext for military intervention".

In a related development, the US embassy in Saudi Arabia advised its personnel to exercise increased caution and avoid non-essential travel. "Given ongoing regional tensions, the US mission to Saudi Arabia has advised its personnel to exercise increased caution and limit non-essential travel to any military installations in the region," the embassy said, also urging Americans to follow the guidance.

Al Udeid, the largest US military base in West Asia, was targeted by Iran in June in retaliation for earlier US strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities. Ali Shamkhani, a senior adviser to Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, warned on Wednesday that the attack had demonstrated Iran's "will and capability to respond to any attack".


Key US Military Bases in
West Asia
Iran warns it may strike US bases if attacked, after President Trump told Iranians to keep protesting and said "help is on the way."
Air Base
Naval
Army Base
Bahrain
Base: US Navy Fifth Fleet HQ
Area of Responsibility: Gulf, Red Sea, Arabian Sea, parts of Indian Ocean
Key Role: Naval operations and regional command
Qatar
Base: Al Udeid Air Base (24 hectares near Doha)
HQ: US Central Command
Coverage: Operations from Egypt to Kazakhstan
Troops: 10,000
Significance: Largest US base in West Asia
Kuwait
US Army Central HQ at Camp Arifjan, Ali Al Salem Air Base and Camp Buehring
JORDAN
Muwaffaq al Salti Air Base
IRAQ
IRAN
KUWAIT
BAHRAIN
QATAR
UAE
Saudi Arabia
Prince Sultan Air Base (60 km south of Riyadh)
OMAN
YEMEN
Iraq
Bases: Ain Al Asad Air Base supports Iraqi forces & NATO
Erbil Air Base is hub for US & coalition training exercises
Notable: Ain Al Asad was targeted by Iran in 2020 after Soleimani killing
United Arab Emirates
Bases & Ports: Al Dhafra Air Base
Jebel Ali Port (Dubai): Largest US Navy port of call in the region

Free Starlink access a game changer for protesters

BANGKOK, AP/PTI: Iranian protesters' ability to get details of nationwide protests out to the world has been given a strong boost, with SpaceX's Starlink satellite internet service dropping its fees to allow more people to circumvent the Tehran's strongest attempt ever to prevent information from spilling outside its borders, activists said on Wednesday.

The move by the American aerospace company run by Elon Musk follows the complete shutdown of telecommunications and internet access to Iran's 85 million people on January 8, as protests expanded over the Islamic Republic's faltering economy.

SpaceX has not officially announced the decision and did not respond to request for comment, but activists told The Associated Press that Starlink has been available for free to anyone in Iran with the receivers since Tuesday.

"Starlink has been crucial," said Mehdi Yahyanejad, an Iranian whose nonprofit Net Freedom Pioneers has helped smuggle units into Iran since the unrest.

WORLD AT A GLANCE

Traditionally built, stitched ship INSV Kaundinya reached the shores of Muscat on Wednesday after a 17-day maiden voyage from Porbandar port, completing a symbolic revival of the ancient maritime arc between India and Oman. PTI

US suspends immigrant visa processing for 75 countries

▶ The United States said Wednesday it was suspending the processing of immigrant visas from 75 countries, President Donald Trump's latest move against foreigners seeking to come to America, AFP reports from Washington.

The US has long rejected visas from people who appear likely to end up needing government welfare, but the State Department said it would now use the same authority for a blanket suspension of immigrant visas based on nationality. "The Trump administration is bringing an end to the abuse of America's immigration system by those who would extract wealth from the American people," State Department spokesman Tommy Pigott said. "Immigrant visa processing from these 75 countries will be paused," he said. White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt posted on X that the countries affected would include Somaliaas well as Russia and Iran. A US official said that the other countries affected would include a number of countries with friendly relations, including Brazil, Egypt and Thailand. Other countries to face the pause include Nigeria.

Indian national faces trial over wife's murder in Canada

OTTAWA, PTI: Murder trial has begun in a Canadian court for an Indian national accused of stabbing his wife to death in British Columbia, a media report has said.

Jagpreet Singh, 52, who is accused of killing his wife, Balwinder Kaur, stabbed her multiple times days after he arrived from India on March 9, 2024, CBC News said on Tuesday.

On Monday, Singh appeared in British Columbia's Abbotsford courthouse, which was told that Singh arrived in Canada on a visitor visa to visit his wife and daughter. "Six days later, Ms Kaur was dead, and Mr Singh was in police custody," Crown prosecutor Rob Macgowan told the court, outlining the brief timeline between Singh's arrival and the killing.

Thailand crane collapses onto train, killing 32

Builder behind China-backed rail project faces scrutiny

NAKHON RATCHASIMA, AFP

A crane at a China-backed high-speed rail project in Thailand collapsed onto a passenger train on Wednesday and caused it to derail, killing at least 32 people, authorities said.

The massive crane was left resting on giant concrete pillars while dozens of rescuers worked searched for missing people in mangled train carriages in Nakhon Ratchasima province, northeast of the capital Bangkok. The company contracted to build the section of the high-speed rail where the crane fell, Italian-Thai Development—one of Thailand's biggest construction firms—has seen several deadly accidents at its sites in recent years.

Rescue officials work at the accident site in Nakhon Ratchasima province on Wednesday. REUTERS

The firm expressed condolences for those killed and the dozens injured, saying in a statement it would "take responsibility for compensating the victims' families and covering medical expenses".

From a hospital bed in Nakhon Ratchasima, survivor Taew Eimertenbrink, 63, said her German husband "was killed instantly" in the derailment.

"I was sleeping. He was sleeping. A metal bar was on him," she told reporters.

The couple was visiting from Germany and travelling to Taew's hometown in Surin province, she said.

The Thai health ministry said 32 people were confirmed dead, three were missing and 64 were hospitalised, including seven in serious condition.

India dismisses Canada's allegations on killing of Sikh separatist leader

OTTAWA, PTI

Indian High Commissioner Dinesh K Patnaik has dismissed Canada's old allegations linking New Delhi to the killing of a Sikh separatist leader, asserting that the case is against four individuals and not against the Government of India.

In an interview with CBC News on Tuesday, Patnaik also pointed out how the investigation into the Air India bombing has still not yielded anything, despite New Delhi talking about terrorism in Canada for the last 40 years.

The remarks by Patnaik, who took charge in September 2025, coincided with British Columbia Premier David Eby's visit to India on a trade mission amid the improving relationship between New Delhi and Ottawa.

The ties between India and Canada strained after the then-prime minister Justin Trudeau's allegations in September 2023 of a "potential" involvement of Indian agents in Hardeep Singh Nijjar's killing outside a gurdwara in Surrey city on June 18 that year.

India, which had designated Nijjar as a terrorist in 2020, had strongly rejected the allegations as "absurd" and "motivated."

The two countries have taken several steps in recent months to normalise their relations. They have also agreed to revive several mechanisms to advance relations in a range of areas.

Patnaik was asked how the two countries move past the 'gap' of more than a year after Trudeau's accusation. "Well, where is the evidence? Every time you keep on saying credible information, which is fine," Patnaik said.

Indian woman in Pak shelter home

▶ An Indian Sikh woman, who contracted marriage with a local Muslim during a visit to Pakistan in November, was arrested and sent to a government-run shelter home in Lahore, PTI reports from Lahore.

Sarabjeet Kaur, 48, was among 2,000 Sikh pilgrims who had entered Pakistan via Wagah border from India in November to attend the festivities related to the birth anniversary of Guru Nanak. The pilgrims returned home after a few days, but Kaur went missing. A senior police officer in Lahore later said that Kaur contracted marriage with Nasir Hussain of Sheikhupura district, a day after she arrived in Pakistan on November 4.

Fashion influencer Chiara Ferragni speaks to the media after being acquitted on fraud charges linked to the sales of a Christmas cake and Easter eggs, in Milan, Italy, on Wednesday. REUTERS

10 Indian fishermen arrested

▶ The Sri Lankan Navy has arrested 10 Indian fishermen and seized their trawler for allegedly fishing in the island nation's territorial waters, PTI reports from Colombo.

The arrests were made on Monday in the northern sea area off Delft Island, the Navy said in a statement. The 10 Indian fishermen and their seized trawler were handed over to the Fisheries Inspector of Myliddy, Jaffna, for legal proceedings, it said. Fishermen from both countries are arrested frequently for inadvertently trespassing into each other's waters. The fishermen issue is a contentious one in the ties between India and Sri Lanka, with Lankan Navy personnel even firing at Indian fishermen in the Palk Strait.

Japan's PM plans early snap poll

▶ Japan's Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi plans to dissolve the lower house of Parliament soon to pave the way for a snap election to seek the public's mandate for her policies, AP/PTI reports from Tokyo.

Takaichi was elected as Japan's first female prime minister in October. A snap election is seen as an attempt to capitalise her still strong approval ratings of around 70 per cent to help her beleaguered governing party gain more seats. Shunichi Suzuki, secretary general of the governing Liberal Democratic Party, told reporters that Takaichi told him and other top officials her plan to dissolve the lower house "soon" after it convenes on January 23. Suzuki did not give dates for a dissolution or a snap election.

Government of Karnataka
BIDAR CITY CORPORATION
Phone: 08482-240432 Fax: 08482–240432
Web Site:www.bidarcity.mrc.gov.in E-mail ID:itstaff_ulb-bidar@yahoo.com, ka.bidar.cmc@gmail.com
No: BMC/ENG/CR-227/2025-26/888 Dated:-12.01.2026

TENDER NOTIFCATION

1) Name of work **DMA/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT53844,** 2) Estimated cost As per kppp-portal, 3) Eligibility of Agency / Consultant As per kppp-portal, 4) EMD amount As per kppp-portal, 5) Last date for submission of **tender 29-01-2026 upto 04.00 PM,** 6) Technical bid opening **30-01-2026 at 04.30 PM,** 7) Address for communication Commissioner, City Corporation Bidar, Pin code 585401, Email : ka.bidar.cmc@gmail.com, 8) Website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/

DIPR/Bidar/294/KSMC&A/2025-26

Sd/- Commissioner
City Corporation, Bidar

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ, ಇಲಾಖೆ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ
ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್‌ರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ
ಸಂ: 15/2025–2026 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 14.01.2026

ಮಂಡ್ಯ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ವಿವಿಧ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಐಟಂವಾರು ದರದ ಟೆಂಡರುಗಳ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ KW-4 ರ ರೀತಿ ದ್ವಿಲಕೋಟೆ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ https:// kppp.karnataka.gov.in ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಾಗಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಬಹುದು. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪೂರ್ವಭಾವಿ ಸಭೆಯನ್ನು ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್, ರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ವಿಭಾಗ ಮಂಡ್ಯ, ರವರ ಕಛೇರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 20.01.2026** ರಂದು ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11–00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಾಖಲಾತಿಗಳನ್ನು **ದಿನಾಂಕ 14.01.2026** ರಿಂದ ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ಮೂಲಕ ಡೌನ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳ ಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ವಿಚಾರಣೆ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 22.01.2026** ಸಂಜೆ 5.30 ಘಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ, ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 23.01.2026** ಸಂಜೆ 4.30 ಘಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ, ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ **ದಿನಾಂಕ 27.01.2026** ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆ ನಂತರ ಅಥವಾ ನಂತರದ ಕೆಲಸದ ದಿನಗಳು, ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 28.01.2026** ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ಅಥವಾ ನಂತರದ ಕೆಲಸದ ದಿನಗಳು. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆ ಬೆಲೆ ಇ–ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ರಂತೆ. ಕಾಲಮಿತಿ: ಮಳೆಗಾಲ ಸೇರಿ 4 ತಿಂಗಳು ಒಟ್ಟು 2 (ಎರಡು), ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ಪೈಕಿ ಗರಿಷ್ಠ ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ.180.00 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು ಕನಿಷ್ಠ ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ.140.00 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ. ಬೆಲೆ ಇ–ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ರಂತೆ, ಕೆಲಸಗಳ ವಿವರ, ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ, ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ., ಮೊತ್ತ ಮುಂತಾದ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಳನ್ನು ಸದರಿ ಕಛೇರಿಯಿಂದ ಕಛೇರಿ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು.

ಟಿಪ್ಪಣಿ: (1) ಈ ಕೆಳಗೆ ಸಹಿ ಮಾಡಿರುವವರು ಯಾವುದೇ ಕಾರಣಗಳನ್ನು ನೀಡದೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯ ಮುಂದೂಡುವಿಕೆ /ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣವಾಗಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ರದ್ದುಗೊಳಿಸುವ/ಟೆಂಡರ್ ನಿರಾಕರಿಸುವ ಹಕ್ಕನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ.

(2) ಇನ್ನು ಮುಂದೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾವುದೇ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳು ಇದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ದಿನ ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಲಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ, ಬದಲಾಗಿ ವಿದ್ಯುನ್ಮಾನ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆ ವೇದಿಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳನ್ನು ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಸಹಿ/–ಕಾ.ಇಂ.,ಲೋ.ಇ.,ವಿಭಾಗ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ

Gaza entering second phase of ceasefire plan: US

WASHINGTON/CAIRO, AP/PTI

The United States and Egypt are advancing plans for a Palestinian technocratic committee to govern Gaza under the US-brokered ceasefire, while Hamas has pledged to dissolve its existing government once the new leadership takes over.

US envoy Steve Witkoff said on Wednesday that the ceasefire plan is entering its next phase, focused on demilitarising Gaza, establishing a technocratic administration, and rebuilding the territory. He added that Hamas is expected to return the final deceased hostage as part of its obligations, though details of the transitional Palestinian administration remain unclear.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty confirmed that all 15 members of the proposed Palestinian technocratic committee have been agreed upon by the relevant parties.

Hamas officials earlier said the group had opened talks with Egyptian mediators in Cairo to finalise the committee, which will manage daily life and essential services in Gaza. Abdelatty expressed hope the committee would be deployed soon. Hamas has said it will limit its role to monitoring governance, ensuring stability, and facilitating reconstruction, without participating in day-to-day administration. Senior Hamas negotiator Khalil al-Hayya is expected to lead talks with other Palestinian factions this week to finalise operational mechanisms.

Under Trump's plan, the technocratic committee will operate under the supervision of an international "Board of Peace," chaired by Trump. The board is tasked with overseeing disarmament of Hamas, deployment of an international security force, reconstruction of Gaza, and continued monitoring of the ceasefire.

Government Of Karnataka
Women and Child Development Department, Gadag
No:DDWCD:T:N:2025-26 Date:13.01.2026

E-Procurement Tender Call-2

The Department of Women and Child Development has invited tenders through e-procurement from eligible external resource agencies on an outsourcing basis for the purchase of various materials required for the Anganwadi centers of Gadag District for the year **2025-26** As per the conditions of the tender, eligible tenderers/institutions must submit the filled tenders only through the Karnataka Government E-procurement portal at **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** according to the schedule specified below.

Tender Information

1	Date and Time for Receipt of Tender	Date: 13.01.2026 5.00 PM http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in
2	Tender Total Amount	Rs.80.80 Lakhs
3	EMD Amount	Rs.80800/-
4	Last Date and Time for uploading Tender	Date: 21.01.2026 05:30 PM
5	More Information for E - Tender	Deputy Director Department of Women and Child Development, Gadag

Sd/- Deputy Director
Women and Child Development Department, Gadag
DIPR/Gadag/532/Deshpadepublicity/2025-26

UK expected to approve 'mega' Chinese embassy

LONDON, AP/PTI: Britain's government is expected to approve a "mega" Chinese embassy close to London's financial district after years of controversy and political wrangling over the potential security risks it poses to the UK.

Lawmakers from across the spectrum have urged planning officials to reject China's application for the new embassy. Critics fear the proposed new building, on a huge site close to London's financial district and crucial data cables, will be used as a base for espionage.

Canada's Prime Minister Mark Carney inspects a guard of honour upon his arrival in Beijing on Wednesday. It is the first visit by a Canadian prime minister to China since 2017. REUTERS

Infosys Q3 net falls 2%; raises FY26 revenue guidance

Firm takes Rs 1,289-cr hit due to new labour codes

UMA KANNAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

IT services major Infosys on Wednesday revised its revenue growth guidance for FY26 to 3%-3.5% from the earlier forecast of 2%-3% on the back of strong Q3 performance. The company posted a 2.2% decline in its consolidated net profit for the quarter ended December 2025 to Rs 6,654 crore, as it took a Rs 1,289-crore hit on new labour codes. The company is expecting a recurring impact of this change at 15 bps p.a.

Infosys had posted Rs 6,806 crore net profit in the year-ago period. It delivered a strong revenue growth of 8.9% year-on-year at Rs 45,479 crore, compared to Rs 41,764 crore it reported in the year-ago period.

The firm's adjusted operating margin stood at 21.2% and its large deal total contract value (TCV) was at $4.8 billion.

During the company's post-earnings press conference, Infosys CEO and MD Salil Parekh said the company had strong momentum in AI adoption across its client base. "We work with 90% of our largest 200 clients to unlock value with AI. We're currently working on 4,600 AI projects. Our teams have generated over 28 million lines of code using AI," he said, adding that they have built over 500 agents.

He also informed that the company is witnessing emergence of six AI value pools that could unlock a large incremental opportunity. These value pools are AI engineering services, data for AI, agents for operations, AI software development and legacy modernisation, AI deployed on physical devices, and AI trust and risk services.

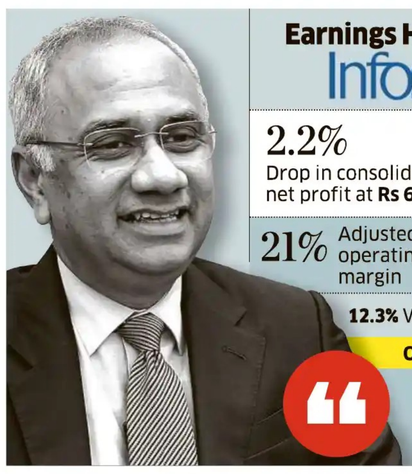
Parekh said they are uniquely positioned to capture market share across these value pools. He added that the company's large deals pipeline is healthy. Its financial services, manufacturing and energy & utility sectors grew 3.9%, 6.6% and 0.5%, respectively, in constant currency terms y-o-y.

On financial services and energy & utilities, resources and services sectors, he said, "The way our work on AI is going and the way the deals have shaped up, we see a good outlook as we look even beyond this financial year into the next financial year."

Last year, Infosys launched its AI-first GCC (Global Capability Centre) Model, and when asked about its progress, Parekh told *DH* that they are already working with clients and that there are several others who are in the pipeline for large AI-specific capability-building in GCC.

Parekh denied reports claiming that a Mysuru-based Infosys employee was detained or deported by US immigration authorities.

His clarification comes after a post on social media claimed that an employee from Infosys, who worked in the US, was picked up by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents in the US. "No employee has been apprehended by any US authority. A few months ago, one of our employees was denied entry into the US and was sent back to India," he told the press conference.



Earnings Highlights — Infosys

The company is witnessing emergence of six AI value pools that could unlock a large incremental opportunity

- 2.2% ↓ Drop in consolidated net profit at **Rs 6,654 cr**
- 8.9% ↑ Increase in revenue at **Rs 45,479 cr**
- **Rs 1,289 cr** Impact on earnings due to new labour codes
- 21% Adjusted operating margin
- $4.8 bn Large deal wins
- 337,034 Total employees
- **12.3%** Voluntary attrition
- **3% to 3.5%** Revenue growth guidance
- **On track to add 20,000 freshers in FY26**

"Clients increasingly view Infosys as their AI partner with demonstrated expertise, innovation capabilities and strong delivery credentials."
SALIL PAREKH, CEO and MD, Infosys

PICS: PTI

Company adds over 5,000 employees in Q3

At a time when the company's peers are reducing their workforce, Infosys has added 5,043 employees in the December quarter alone. The company has been increasing its headcount for many quarters now.

In Q2 FY26, it added 8,203 employees. The company's voluntary attrition rate has also come down to 12.3% in the December quarter, compared to 13.7% in the year-ago period. This signals a strong growth momentum as its larger peer TCS has reported around 30,000 net fall in headcount in the last six months alone. HCLTech's net addition declined by 261 employees in Q3.

"Headcount increase demonstrates that we have confidence in where the market is and where we are seeing demand," Infosys CEO and MD Salil Parekh said. Infosys CFO Jayesh Sanghrajka said the company has onboarded 18,000 freshers during the quarter, and is on track to add 20,000 this fiscal.

Jayesh Sanghrajka

WPI inflation rises to 8-month high of 0.83% in Dec

Inflation in manufactured products rises to 1.82% during month

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Other manufacturing, basic metals, chemicals and chemical products, textiles and other non-metallic mineral products sectors showed MoM increase in prices. REUTERS FILE PHOTO

Wholesale price inflation rose to an 8-month high of 0.83% in December after remaining in the negative zone in the previous two months, as prices of food and manufactured goods firmed up, official data showed on Wednesday.

The annual Wholesale Price Index-based (WPI) inflation stood at (-) 0.32% in November and a 27-month low of (-) 1.02% in October. The WPI inflation was recorded at 2.57% in December 2024.

"Positive rate of inflation in December 2025 is primarily due to increase in prices of other manufacturing, minerals, manufacture of machinery and equipment, manufacture of food products and textiles etc," the Ministry of Commerce & Industry said in a statement.

After witnessing a deflation of 2.60%, WPI food index remained flat in December. This means the price level of food items in December was the same as in the corresponding month of the previous year.

Inflation in manufactured products rose to 1.82% in December, from 1.33% in the previous month. Manufactured products have 64.23% weight in the WPI.

"This uptick was primarily driven by a moderation in food price deflation and higher inflation in manufactured products," said Rajani Sinha, Chief Economist, CareEdge Ratings.

Out of the groups of manufactured products, 13 witnessed an increase in prices, eight registered decline, while one witnessed no change.

Some of the important groups that showed month-over-month increase in prices were: other manufacturing, basic metals, chemicals and chemical products, textiles and other non-metallic mineral products.

However, there was a decline in the prices of rubber and plastic products; food products; computer, electronic and optical products; paper and paper products and beverages in December, when compared with the previous month.

"Looking ahead, robust agricultural activity, favourable base effect, and adequate reservoir levels are expected to help contain food price pressures. Deflation in the fuel and power category remained unchanged at 2.3%. Overall, WPI inflation continues to remain at comfortable levels," said Sinha.

Going forward, WPI inflation is expected to edge up marginally due to the low base of last year. However, it would remain largely benign, averaging around 0.4% in FY26, she added.

Deflation continued in the fuel and power sectors, at 2.31% in December, against 2.27% in the previous month. Low oil prices in the global markets have helped keep fuel and power prices low in India.

Globally, commodity prices have remained broadly stable, supported by oversupply in the global crude oil market and persistent overcapacity in China. The global crude oil supply glut is likely to persist in 2026, with production continuing to exceed consumption.

India gets $51 bn FDI in H1FY26, says DPIIT

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

India received FDI worth around $51 billion in the first half of the current fiscal, reflecting sustained global confidence in the country's growth story, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) Secretary Amardeep Singh Bhatia said on Wednesday.

Talking to reporters, Bhatia said the government is strongly focused on boosting manufacturing in the country. "New products are being manufactured, and significant investments are flowing into the manufacturing sector," he said.

The DPIIT secretary said the government has been pushing corporates to enhance their engagement with startups.

"We have been pushing corporates to deepen their engagements with startups. Companies can outsource problems to startups," Bhatia added, noting that the government has taken a series of steps in the last 10 years to strengthen the startup ecosystem in the country.

Around two lakh entities have been recognised as startups by the DPIIT since the Startup India initiative was launched in 2016.

National Startup Day will be celebrated on January 16. Addressing a curtain raiser press conference on the proposed event, Bhatia informed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi would inaugurate the event. "We expect that a lot of deep-tech startups will come up," he said.

Air India signs codeshare pact with Saudia

BENGALURU, DHNS: Air India and Saudia, the flag carrier of Saudi Arabia, on Wednesday signed a codeshare agreement that will take effect in February.

The codeshare agreement introduces a range of benefits for passengers, providing those flying with Saudia access to major cities across India via Mumbai and Delhi, including Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Kochi, Hyderabad, Chennai, Lucknow, and Jaipur.

Meanwhile, Air India passengers travelling to Jeddah or Riyadh can take seamless onward connections on Saudia-operated flights to Dammam, Abha, Gassim, Gizan, Madinah, and Taif.

Puravankara's pre-sales up 17% in Q3FY26

BENGALURU, DHNS: Real estate developer Puravankara Limited on Wednesday reported pre-sales of Rs 1,414 crore in Q3FY26, marking a 17% year-on-year growth. The average price realisation improved by 12% YoY, while customer collections for the quarter grew by 22% YoY to Rs 1,140 crore.

Ashish Puravankara

Commenting on the company's performance, Ashish Puravankara, Managing Director, Puravankara Limited, said, "In nine months of FY26, we made significant progress in expanding our portfolio, adding over 12.76 million sq ft of potential developable area with an estimated GDV of approximately Rs 13,900 crore. These include marquee acquisitions across Bengaluru and Mumbai, such as a 53.5-acre land parcel in Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru; large-scale partnerships in North and East Bengaluru; and redevelopment projects at Malabar Hill and Chembur. Our focus remains on disciplined execution and value creation through strategic expansion in high-demand micro-markets."

In Q3FY26, the company achieved pre-sales of Rs 1,414 crore and collections of Rs 1,140 crore, both improving year-on-year.

During the quarter, Puravankara handed over 1.23 msft, delivering 1,116 homes, bringing the cumulative handover for 9MFY26 to 2.58 msft (2,446 homes).

In Q3FY26, Puravankara launched Purva Silversky at Hebbagodi Village, Attibele Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru, with a total saleable area of 7,73,111 sq ft. The project comprises 356 homes across 3, 4 and 5 BHK configurations.

During 9M FY26, the total saleable area launched stood at 2.83 msft, including 2.05 msft from new phase launches.

NZ delegation meets Kharge; explores joint collaboration

BENGALURU, DHNS: A delegation from New Zealand's innovation ecosystem, participating in the Prime Minister's Scholarship for Asia (PMSA) programme, on Wednesday met Priyank Kharge, Minister for IT/BT, Government of Karnataka, and officials of the department and discussed possibilities of collaboration across technology, education, research, skilling, and emerging sectors.

The discussions were focused on strengthening people-to-people connections and building long-term institutional linkages between Karnataka and New Zealand.

The PMSA is a New Zealand Government–funded initiative administered by Education New Zealand, aimed at deepening partnerships across Asia. The visiting delegation comprised representatives from New Zealand's research, technology, education, and innovation ecosystem.

During the meeting, Kharge suggested that the delegation engage closely with the Department of IT & BT through Karnataka's Global Innovation Alliance (GIA) platform to enable sustained engagement with startups, academia, industry, and government stakeholders.

Auto component exports up 9.3% during April-Sept

NEW DELHI, DHNS: India's exports of auto components grew by 9.3% to $12.1 billion in the first half of the current fiscal despite global headwinds, the Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India (ACMA) said on Wednesday.

In the first six months of the current fiscal, India imported auto components worth $12.3 billion, which is 12.5% higher when compared with the corresponding period of the previous year.

The sharper increase in imports turned India's auto component trade into negative. In the first six months of the current fiscal, India recorded a trade deficit of $180 million in the auto component sector against a surplus of $150 million recorded in H1 of FY25.

"It is important to note that this export growth was achieved despite significant global headwinds, including supply-chain disruptions, raw material cost pressures, and weakening aggregate demand in key markets," ACMA said.

The US and Germany remained among the top export destinations, while China, Japan and Germany continued to be the leading sources of imports.

ACMA Director General Vinnie Mehta said the negative impact of the high US tariffs would be felt more in H2FY26.

HCLTech elevates Sandeep Saxena as Chief Growth Officer

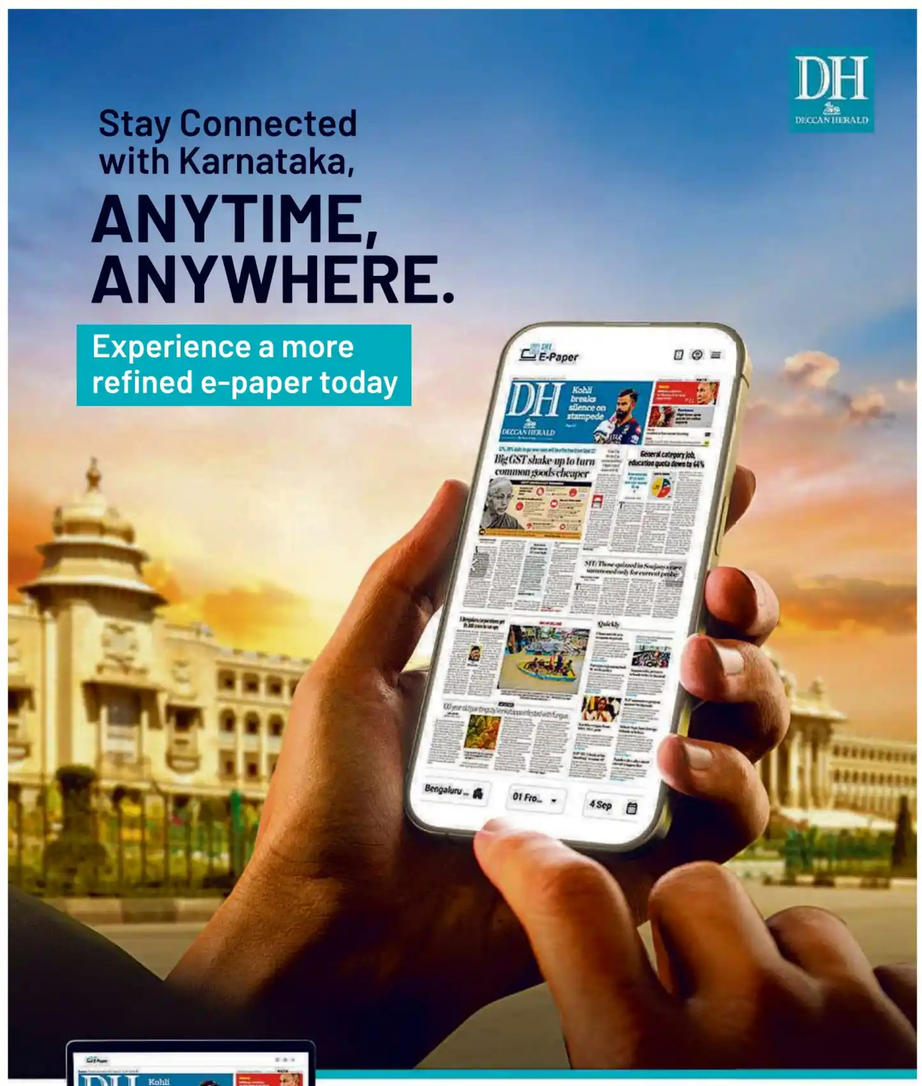
BENGALURU, DHNS: IT services company HCLTech on Wednesday announced the elevation of company veteran Sandeep Saxena to Chief Growth Officer – Growth Markets 2, to lead India and other key markets, including the Middle East and Africa.

Sandeep Saxena

The appointment is part of HCLTech's strategy to sharpen its focus, in particular, on the India region.

Saxena will be based in Mumbai and report to the CEO & Managing Director, C Vijayakumar.

"HCLTech has played a defining role in shaping India's technology growth story through sustained innovation and global leadership. As one of the world's fastest-growing economies, India presents a significant opportunity, and we will bring our global scale, deep expertise and full-stack capabilities to help enterprises harness next-generation technologies and accelerate growth," Vijayakumar said.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LUXE ON WHEELS

India to be 1st country outside of US to roll out GLS Maybach

PUNE, PTI

German luxury carmaker Mercedes-Benz will start local production of its ultra-luxury SUV 'GLS Maybach' in India, making it the only country outside of the US to roll out the model, according to the company's top executive in the Indian market.

The step comes in the wake of India becoming a top-five global market for the company's ultra-luxury range, Maybach, in 2025, Mercedes-Benz India Managing Director and CEO Santosh Iyer said.

Sharing plans for the company in 2026, he said a total of 12 new products have been lined up for introduction in India this year, where the luxury segment is expected to grow in single digits amid pricing pressure due to adverse currency fluctuation.

Mercedes-Benz India, which clocked a marginal decline in total sales at 19,007 units in 2025 as compared to 2024, is also stepping up to make it easier for its electric vehicle owners to locate fast-chargers and pay for charging by bringing 'MB. Charge Public, which is available currently in 37 other countries as part of its electrification drive.

"We have climbed into the top-five global markets for Maybach in the world for the first time in 2025... the largest-selling Maybach in India is the GLS Maybach. This model currently comes from the US, but we are localising it in India," Iyer said.

As a result of the localisation, he said, the model will be priced at Rs 2.75 crore, down from the current price of Rs 3.17 crore, he added.

Among the top-five global markets for the Maybach range are China, the US, South Korea, and Germany, besides India.

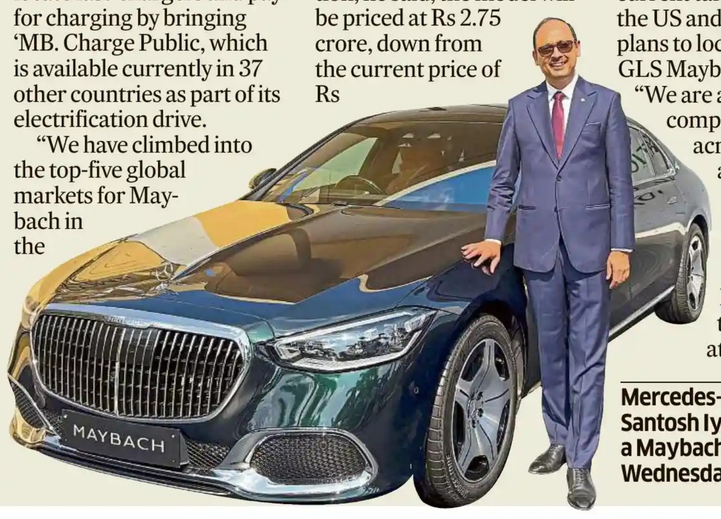
When asked about the possible impact of the current tariff issues between the US and India on the plans to locally assemble GLS Maybach, Iyer said, "We are a multinational company doing trade across boundaries and regions, and we have to adapt to whatever is happening..."

Mercedes-Benz produces the GLS Maybach at its Tuscaloosa plant in Alabama, US, for all global markets. Its plan to locally assemble the model in India comes at a time when US President Donald Trump has been pushing companies to manufacture in the country.

"We are not stopping production (of GLS Maybach) in the US, that is going to continue. This (assembling in India) is more for the local requirement," Iyer clarified.

On new product plans for this calendar year, Iyer said, "We have a clear focus to introduce 12 new cars in 2026."

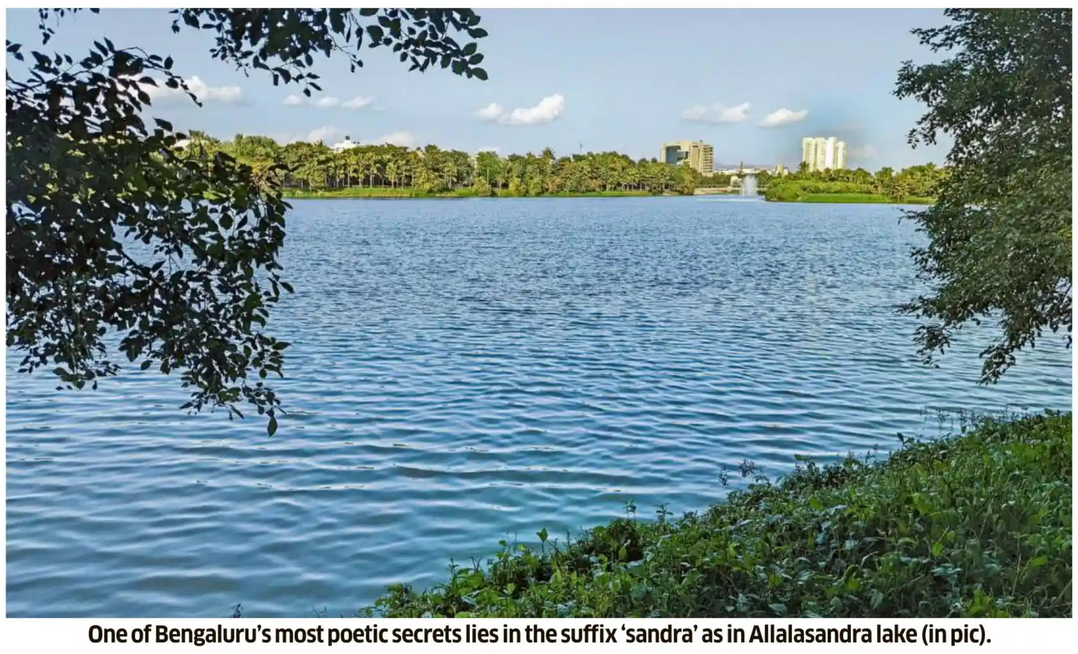
The company kick-started the 2026 launch programme with its Mercedes-Maybach GLS 'Celebration Edition' priced at Rs 4.10 crore. It also launched the EQS SUV 'Celebration Edition' starting at Rs 1.34 crore (5-seater) and Rs 1.48 crore (7-seater).



Mercedes-Benz India CEO Santosh Iyer poses beside a Maybach in Pune on Wednesday. REUTERS

Bengaluru, etched in its names

Long before glass towers and IT parks, Bengaluru evolved as a network of villages, lakes and centres of learning, traces of which are still legible in its names, writes Udaya Kumar P L



One of Bengaluru's most poetic secrets lies in the suffix 'sandra' as in Allalasandra lake (in pic). PHOTOS BY AUTHOR

A stone inscription dating back to 890 CE, kept at the Panchalingeshwara Temple in Beguru, records a battle fought in a place called "Benguluru."

When you drive down the leafy avenues of Bengaluru or take a Metro ride across the city, you are not merely commuting — you are moving through a living history book. You have probably glanced at the signboards — Koramangala, Sunkadakatte, Pattandur — without a second thought. To the average Bengalurean, these are just GPS pins or the names you mutter while cursing our daily commute woes.

But if you pause and look closer, these names reveal themselves as time capsules.

They are not random sounds, but echoes of a city that was a centre of scholarly institutions, vast water bodies, military camps and bustling trade hubs even centuries ago.

First, let us settle one thing: Bengaluru is not new. While the shiny glass facades of Whitefield may look modern, the ground beneath them is ancient.

Evidence of this past survives at the Panchalingeshwara Temple in Beguru (Begur), where an inscription carved into stone and dating back to 890 CE records a battle fought in a place called "Benguluru."

A city of 'hallis'

Bengaluru is often imagined as one single, massive city, but the suffix *-uru* reveals that the city is actually a massive patchwork. In Kannada, *uru* or *pura* means a town or large settlement.

Bengaluru is, in fact, stitched together from nearly 200 ancient, independent *uru-puras* such as Dombalur (now Domlur), Varthur, Yadiyuru, Yeshavantapura, and a staggering 450 *hallis* (villages) such as Akkithimmanahalli, Harohalli, Yelachenahalli and Shivanahalli.

Centuries before the Outer Ring Road linked them, these were self-sufficient towns with their own chieftains and temples. To live in an *uru* today is not just to occupy a neighbourhood — it is to inhabit a historical town that has preserved its identity across centuries.

Centres of learning

Bengaluru's status as an education hub today is rooted in a tradition that records show is centuries old. The proof is in the names ending with 'Agrahara' or 'Mangala'.

In ancient times, kings, chieftains and merchants would grant entire villages to learned scholars to set up centres of worship and learning. These settlements, called Agraharas and Mangalas, were the medieval equivalent of residential university campuses.

They housed people of all communities while learning was mostly limited to Brahmins. There is a mention of around 45 Agraharas and Mangalas (auspicious towns) in the records.

So, remember, when you drive through Roopena Agrahara or Sarakki Agrahara or Koramangala, you are driving through the "IIMs" and "IIScs" of the past. In an amazing twist of irony, the Bengaluru jail today, located at Parappana Agrahara, continues this legacy as a place for "relearning" and correction.

The original social network

Long before Facebook groups or WhatsApp chats, Bengaluru had the *kattes*.

A *katte* is a raised platform, usually built around a massive peepal or banyan tree. It served as the village parliament, the gossip corner and a resting place for travellers.

Bengaluru's locality records are full of them — Sunkadakatte (the toll platform) and Aralikatte (the peepal tree platform), to name a few.

Imagine Sunkadakatte centuries ago: a bustling checkpoint where traders halted their bullock carts, paid a small toll (*sunka*), and sat beneath the tree to exchange news. It was, in many ways, the city's original social network.

One of the city's most poetic secrets lies in the suffix — *sandra* — as in Thippasandra, Bommasandra or Jakkasandra. It comes from *samudra*, meaning ocean. Bengaluru, of course, had no sea, but our ancestors used this grand word to describe the vast lakes they built. Every *sandra* is a memory of a shimmering, life-giving "ocean" that once cooled the city.

The 'palyas'

Moving from water to barracks, we encounter the *palyas*. Unlike the agricultural *hallis*, the suffix *palya* often hints at a military past, tracing back to the 18th century reigns of Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan. These were often camps for soldiers or specialised workers. Sultanpalya, for instance, echoes the ruler's regiment, while Kalasipalya was historically home to the *kalasis*, tent-pitchers and camp followers who were the backbone of an army on the move. These localities, today, stand as living reminders of the hands that built and safeguarded Bengaluru.

Many markets

Finally, the city's prosperity is etched into its *petes* — the markets. Kumbarpete is the potters' market. Tigalarapete takes its name from the Tigala community, custodians of the Karaga festival. Historically, they were expert gardeners and were responsible for many of Bengaluru's famous gardens.

Upparapete was the salt sellers' market, while Ganigarapete was the oil-pressers' market.

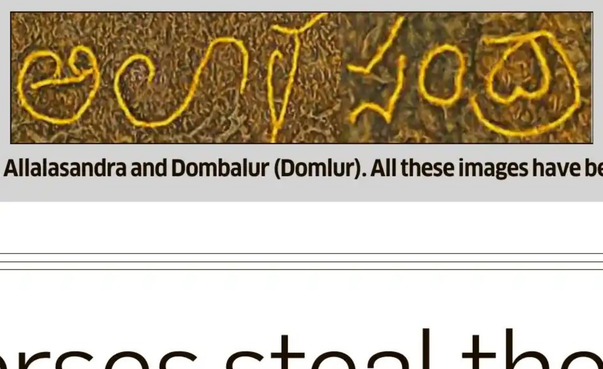
These names are a salute to the dignity of labour. They remind us that Bengaluru wasn't built by kings alone — it was built by potters, weavers, salt-sellers and gardeners.

And to keep the city fragrant, there were the *thotas* or gardens. Mallige Thota, a jasmine garden, and Attiguppe, a grove of fig trees, evoke a time when the air was filled with the scents of flowers.

So, the next time you glance at a signboard, remember that it points not just to a place, but to a past. Whether you are in an *uru* (a town), a *palya* (a military camp) or a *pete* (a market), you are standing on stories that span centuries.

The glazed high-rises may be new, but the soul of the city is ancient, warm and very much alive.

(The author is the Honorary Project Director of The Mythic Society, Bengaluru)



Inscriptions mentioning Harohalli, Allalasandra and Dombalur (Domlur). All these images have been proposed as postal cancellations for local post offices.

Krishnaraja Wadiyar IV and his younger brother Kanteerava Narasimharaja Wadiyar with their tutor S M Fraser. CREDIT: KARNATAKA STATE ARCHIVES

The making of a Maharaja

Drawing on archival records, S Narendra Prasad traces how Krishnaraja Wadiyar IV's rigorous schooling informed his enlightened governance

The progressive vision that defined Maharaja Krishnaraja Wadiyar IV's reign was shaped by his education. Trained from a young age under an exclusive royal tutoring system, the future ruler of Mysore was exposed to both Indian traditions and Western administrative practices, as well as the etiquette and manners of contemporary royal courts.

Krishnaraja Wadiyar IV who ruled over the princely state of Mysore from 1902 to 1940 was not only benevolent, but also progressive. His reign saw the emergence of democratic spirits which later influenced the introduction of constitutional reforms in stages and gave space to political movements.

Under his leadership, Mysore became industrially advanced with initiatives in public health and sanitation, transport and communication, rural electrification, and cottage and small-scale industries. Agriculture, irrigation, cooperative institutions and banking received sustained support while general, technical and adult education was also prioritised.

Krishnaraja Wadiyar IV was born in 1884 to Maharaja Chamaraja Wadiyar X and Maharani Vani Vilas Sannidhana. When Krishnaraja Wadiyar IV was around seven, the royal family had detailed deliberations on formal schooling and thus it was decided that Krishnaraja Wadiyar IV and his younger brother, Kanteerava Narasimharaja Wadiyar should receive a carefully structured and meticulous education encompassing religious, academic and martial training.

An exclusive school to cater to the royal family and the children of the officers at their service, was established for the purpose, and teachers, known for their scholarship, were recruited. Some of them were distinguished linguists. The entire system was placed under the direct supervision of S M Fraser, an officer of the Imperial Civil Service, who served as tutor and governor to the Maharaja. The objective of this private tutoring system was not merely academic excellence but the careful grooming of future rulers, equipping them to meet the administrative and political challenges of the time.

Records at the Karnataka State Archives, Mysuru, shed light on this educational system. Five surviving 'annual progress reports' submitted by Fraser to the Residency in Bengaluru, offer some rare and interesting insights into Krishnaraja Wadiyar's academic routine and academic progress.

Each annual report concludes with appendices detailing holidays, daily schedules, games, timetables, class marks, half-yearly results and the annual Dasara examination progress card. They record the monthly academic progress of Krishnaraja Wadiyar IV and his classmates, as well as that of his younger brother and his peers, who had similar yet separate training sessions. It also lists subjects taught and the names of instructors. Particularly noteworthy are the statistics on the total number of classes held and the days the young prince was absent due to rituals, travel and other obligations.

Routine at school

While in the school, his daily routine began at 9.30 am. He studied English, mathematics, including algebra and geometry, history, political economy, geography, and science, along with his peers Mirja M Ismail, Ali Khan T S, Lakshmikantharaja Urs M and others. His reading included the *Panchatantra* and *Hasan Angelina*, an Urdu novel. Physical training formed an essential component of his education, with instruction in polo, gymnastics, physical drill, tennis and horse riding. Before retiring for the night, he read English newspapers with the assistance of an assistant tutor on night duty. A drawing teacher, a riding master and an Aide-de-Camp were part of his learning routine.

In his assessments, Fraser observed that 'His Highness' worked conscientiously, though he did not particularly enjoy reading books and lacked uniform excellence across all subjects. Several scholars have observed that this rigorous and structured tutoring played a key role in shaping Krishnaraja Wadiyar IV into an able administrator. In 1902, upon attaining majority, he assumed full powers as Maharaja. The lessons learnt at the Royal School would later manifest in his visionary governance and progressive reforms.

FEEDBACK
Send your ideas and comments to: spectrum@deccanherald.co.in

When horses steal the show: Inside Raibag's unique fair

Attracting breeders from Karnataka and Maharashtra, the annual fair blends commerce, culture and care for horses, writes Chandrashekhar S Chinakekar

It was an early January morning in Raibag, a town in Belagavi district. A vast ground near the railway station buzzed with life — neighing horses, the clatter of hooves, and the busy chatter of herders, buyers and visitors. It was the town's biggest attraction: the horse fair.

From December 31 to January 3 each year, Raibag hosts a four-day fair dedicated to Goddess Laxmi. The horse fair is organised as part of it, for the past few years. The fair draws around 150 horses including from Dharwad, Vijayapura, Bagalkot and Belagavi districts. Due to the town's proximity to Maharashtra, horses from Kolhapur, Pune, Sangli and Satara districts also participate. Every year, at least 10 to 15 horses are traded. Some deals are completed at the fair, while others are finalised later.

Maharashtra has long hosted horse fairs in Akluj, Sarangkheda, Malegaon, Yeloa and Indapur. Karnataka, however, had very few such platforms. For years, horse herders from the state travelled across borders to trade their animals, a process that was expensive and logistically challenging. A few years ago, local enthusiasts decided to change that by bringing the fair closer home. This year marked the seventh edition of the Raibag horse fair, which is steadily gaining prominence in the region, known for horse herding.

The fair showcases horses bred for traditional races, locally known as *sharyattu*, as well as those prized for their gait, temperament, appearance and training. The latter form the majority and are widely used in weddings, fairs, festivals, processions and even film shoots. This year, at least eight to ten such horses fetched prices of around Rs 5 lakh each.

Each horse at the fair carries its own charm and story rooted in its place of origin. Marwari breed horses from Rajasthan captivate with their regal bearing, while Punjabi horses impress with their height, agility and striking appearance. Kathiawari horses from Gujarat and Sindhi horses, native to Pakistan's Sindh region, stand out for strength and resilience. Uday Chaugule, a horse herder from Miraj in Maharashtra, said the Raibag fair has made buying and selling horses easier for breeders from border regions, with participation from herders increasing year after year.

As buyers and enthusiasts negotiate deals, local visitors gather around the competition arenas. The horses compete in events such as gait displays, show-jumping and beauty contests, leaving spectators in awe. Trained to rear on their hind legs, move rhythmically to music and pull carts or chariots with discipline, these horses remain unfazed by noise or crowds. Mahalinga Ammalazhari, a horse herder from Yadawad, who arrived at the fair after riding 80 km on horseback said he takes his horse to various competitions, and he always looks forward to being at the Raibag fair.

Grooming the horse

Behind the spectacle lies painstaking care by passionate owners. They spare no effort in grooming and ensuring their horses are healthy. "Raising and caring for horses is pure joy for me," said Maruti Marigudi, who participated in the fair with four horses valued at over Rs 10 lakh each. "To keep them healthy, we feed them horsegram, wheat husk, gram flour and green fodder."

Daily grooming, including brushing coats for shine, is essential. Exercise is equally important, with horses walking or trotting five to ten kilometres on alternate days, he explains.

Ornamentation is another major aspect, with owners spending anywhere between Rs 20,000 and Rs 30,000 per horse on saddles, bridles, anklets, chest belts, eye covers and headgear.

For organisers like Kalyanrao Deshpande, who has bred horses for over four decades, the fair is driven by both passion and preservation. "We have been organising this fair to ensure horse breeding survives. Twenty years ago, I owned over 30 horses. Today, I have six. I want horse herding to continue in the region," he said. He recalled a time when horses were central to rural life. "Three to four decades ago, farmers, shepherds and cattle rearers depended on horses for travel. Horse carts (tonga), *sharyattu* races and ceremonial horse processions during weddings and festivals were common. Today, these traditions are fading, and so is horse herding. Fairs like this help preserve and promote horse breeds for future generations."

(Translated from Kannada by Divyashri Mudakavi)

The annual horse fair at Belagavi's Raibag draws around 150 horses of various breeds. PHOTOS BY AUTHOR

CRICKET VIJAY HAZARE TROPHY SEMIFINAL

Champs Karnataka eye encore

Hosts take on Vidarbha whom they beat in last year's final

SIDNEY KIRAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

Karnataka and Vidarbha, two sides whose top-order batters have been on fire in this edition of the Vijay Hazare Trophy, will lock horns at BCCI's Centre of Excellence on Thursday in what promises to be a run-loaded semifinal with the latter looking for revenge after being outplayed in last season's title clash.

After a disappointing Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 Trophy following an impressive Ranji Trophy group stage campaign, defending champions Karnataka have been in roaring form in the national one-day championship, thanks in large part to their top-order batting, led by Devdutt Padikkal.

The 25-year-old Padikkal, who somehow isn't considered in the white-ball set-up in the national team, has yet again shown he's as good a player in limited-overs as in the longer format by hammering 721 runs in eight games with four centuries and two fifties at a brilliant average of 103 to lead the overall batting charts.

Skipper Agarwal, with 411 runs at a solid average of 51.37, also has been in solid touch, constantly giving Karnataka strong starts in the company of Padikkal. The duo's consistency has been one of the major factors behind Karnataka's dominant run despite their middle-order blowing hot and cold in the group stage in Ahmedabad.

Vidarbha, the defending Ranji Trophy champions who lost to Karnataka in a one-sided VHT final a year ago in Vadodara, have carried on from where they left off the previous season despite losing their batting lynchpin Karun Nair.

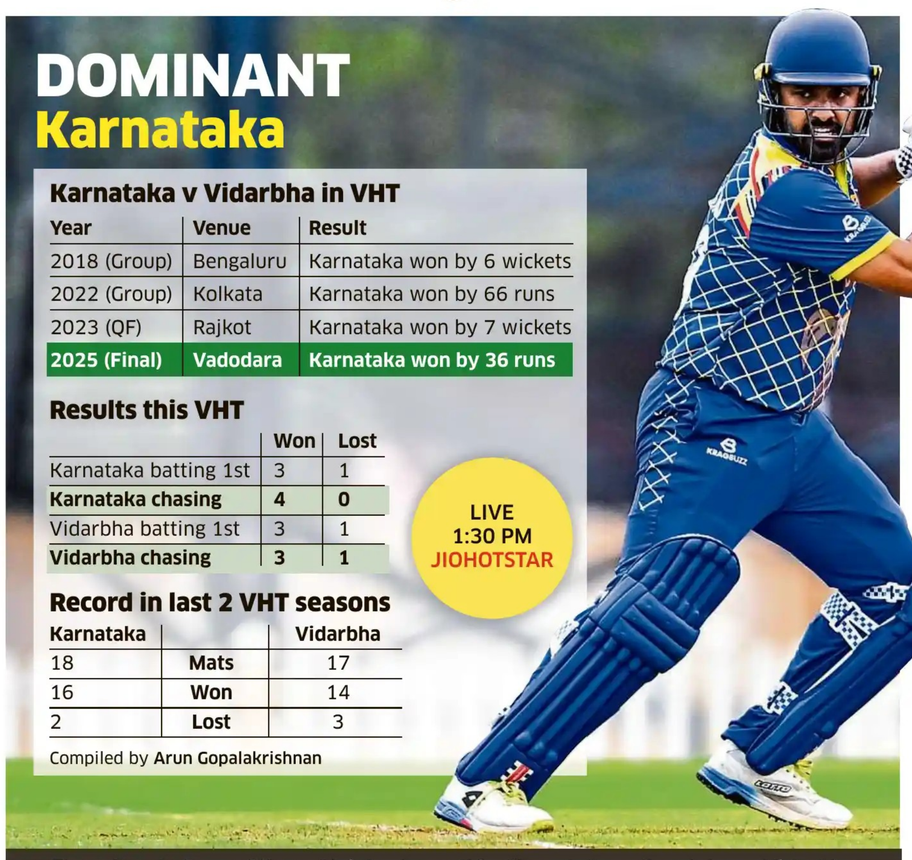
Opener Aman Mokhade is just behind Padikkal with 643 runs, one-drop Dhruv Shorey (468), the hero of the quarterfinal against Delhi, is their second highest run-scorer, former Karnataka player R Smarath — a replacement for Nair — has collected 351 runs, while opener Atharva Taide has 262 runs. So it goes without saying Vidarbha will be banking on their batters to get the job done on Thursday.

Nick of time

Coming into the knockouts, Karnataka were staring at a few concerns which they ironed out somewhat in a dominant quarterfinal display against arch-rivals Mumbai. Vice-captain Nair, who has alternated between the brilliant and ordinary, found his touch in the nick of time with an unbeaten 74 off 80 balls. The only concern for Karnataka is the poor form of R Smaran and wicketkeeper KL Shrijith, the duo who will have to step it up in case there is a top-order collapse.

Karnataka played with four seamers in the quarterfinals, considering the morning 9.00 am start and the cold, overcast conditions throughout the day. The semifinal will be a day/night affair starting at 1:30 pm, so it remains to be seen if coach Yere Goud deploys the same tactics or plays an extra spinner in Shreesha Achar to accompany mainstay Shreyas Gopal.

Karnataka also have a proud record to protect at having never lost to Vidarbha in four VHT meetings, and they'll be buzzing with confidence. Vidarbha, one of the most improved sides over the last decade and a half, will be hoping to turn a new leaf.


DOMINANT
Karnataka
Karnataka v Vidarbha in VHT
Year | Venue | Result
2018 (Group) | Bengaluru | Karnataka won by 6 wickets
2022 (Group) | Kolkata | Karnataka won by 66 runs
2023 (QF) | Rajkot | Karnataka won by 7 wickets
2025 (Final) | Vadodara | Karnataka won by 36 runs
Results this VHT
Won | Lost
Karnataka batting 1st | 3 | 1
Karnataka chasing | 4 | 0
Vidarbha batting 1st | 3 | 1
Vidarbha chasing | 3 | 1
Record in last 2 VHT seasons
Karnataka | Mats | Vidarbha
18 | Mats | 17
16 | Won | 14
2 | Lost | 3
Compiled by Arun Gopalakrishnan
LIVE
1:30 PM
JIOHOTSTAR
The return to form of Karun Nair bodes well for Karnataka as they take on Vidarbha in the semifinals today. DH PHOTO/ KRISHNAKUMAR PS

If not RCB, KSCA may explore possibility of hosting other franchises

BENGALURU, DHNS

With the 19th edition of the IPL set to commence on March 26, Royal Challengers Bengaluru have reportedly zeroed in on DY Patil Stadium in Mumbai and Raipur to host their home matches, but the Karnataka State Cricket Association officials are working hard to get the state government's nod to host matches at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium.

The KSCA officials on Thursday met representatives from the State Government-appointed committee, which visited the M Chinnaswamy Stadium to conduct a review of the work undertaken by the association in accordance with suggestions made by the Justice Michael D'Cunha Commission.

"The KSCA officials and the committee officials met today at the stadium, and held a review of the work we have taken up to bring in structural changes," KSCA spokesperson Vinay Mruthunjaya told *DH*.

"They will now decide whether we can host matches at Chinnaswamy or not. If we get the go-ahead, then we will sit and decide the modalities of conducting the matches."

Meanwhile, RCB Chief Operating Officer Rajesh Menon met Chhattisgarh chief minister Vishnu Deo, and according to sources, Raipur ground would host two of Bengaluru's home matches.

DH has learnt that while RCB matches remained KSCA's priority, they might also explore the option of hosting other franchises' matches if the Diageo-owned team preferred to play its matches outside its designated home venue.

Following the June 4 stampede during Royal Challengers Bengaluru's victory celebrations that left 11 fans dead, the D'Cunha panel inspected the stadium and recommended several structural changes to the venue before it is given the green signal to host big matches.

Shreyas ton powers Blaze CC

BENGALURU, DHNS

Shreyas Kumar K scored an even hundred to power Blaze Cricket Club, Hoskote, to a five-wicket win over Sir MVIT Cricket Club in the KSCA Group I - V Division league-cum-knockout tournament for the JB Mallaradhya Shield here.

After bowling out Sir MVIT for 194 in 44.4 overs, Blaze CC rode on Shreyas' 100 and unbeaten 62 from MR Sachin to scale down the target in 27.1 overs.

Brief scores: Sir MVIT Cricket Club: 194 all out in 44.4 overs (Syed Jaffer 29, Sandeep N 33, Prajwal B 36, Rakesh 32; Gunashekar S 2-25, MR Sachin 2-45, R Jagadish 3-28) lt to Blaze Cricket Club, Hoskote: 196/5 in 27.1 overs (Shreyas Kumar K 100, MR Sachin 62 n.o.).

Young Cricketers (2): 287 all out in 50 overs (Shivam Shrivastava 45, Vinuth Kumar 94, Namohar M 40; Kiran K 2-19, Shareef R 3-42, Santhosh 5-45) lt to Hosakote Cricket Club: 290/7 in 48.3 overs (Polaki Shyam Kumar 25, Madhu J 105, Shareef R 43, Kiran K 42 n.o.; Abhijeet Jha 2-43, Ravi Thakur 3-60).

Crescent Cricket Club (2): 280 all out in 48.1 overs (Girish MS 38, Sanjay AK 32, Naveen Pandith N 36, Saatwik S Moolya 48, Abhishek Veeresh 36; FI Shariq Ahmed 2-47, Nithin C 2-40, Nagarjun Sharma 3-56, Sankalp K 2-42) lt to MES College: 225/3 in 25.4 overs (Sankalp K 25, Rakesh KS 111 n.o., Suhas R 49 n.o.; Sidharth Hari 2-25) via VJD method. Match was interrupted by rain, target revised to 222 in 36 overs.

Bangalore United Cricket Club (2): 223/9 in 50 overs (Raza Mohamood 31, Gagan K 59, Anas S 28 n.o.; Venkatesh H 2-38, Abhilash 2-40, Nataraj V 2-45) lt to Anekal Town Cricket Club: 225/8 in 37.5 overs (Venkatesh HC 36, Yeshwanth Kumar TS 36, Yashwantha 50 n.o., Abhilash 25; Umar L 5-33).

Govt Science College: 115 all out in 23.5 overs (Nithin RM 46; Suraj TR 3-47, Mohammad Ainain 2-26, Koushik BP 4-15) lt to United Cricket Club: 121/3 in 15.4 overs (Rohit R 65 n.o., Srujan C 29).

Karnataka Youth Cricket Association, Malur: 138 all out in 40.1 overs (Srujan Rajesh 44, Shantagoud Patil 3-23, Mani CE 2-14) bt Indiranagar Cricketers: 106 all out in 37 overs (Ananth Padmanabha Upadhaya 2-32, Pratyush Chauhan 3-26).

Semenyo becomes an instant City hit

Ghanian nets opener as Guardiola's men win first-leg semifinal

NEWCASTLE, AFP

Antoine Semenyo made himself an instant Manchester City hero as Pep Guardiola's men took a giant stride towards the League Cup final with a 2-0 win at Newcastle.

The Ghana international, who joined from Bournemouth for £65 million ($87 million) last week, opened the scoring and also had a second goal controversially ruled out.

But Rayan Cherki delivered what could be the knockout blow to the holders in the 98th minute.

The Magpies ended a 70-year wait for a domestic trophy by winning the League Cup last season, but will need a heroic fightback to reach Wembley when the sides meet again for the second leg of the semifinal on February 4.

Semenyo also scored on his debut on Saturday in a 10-1 demolition of Exeter in the FA Cup. In previous years he would have been cup-tied after featuring for Bournemouth earlier in the competition.

Newcastle boss Eddie Howe made clear his dissatisfaction before the game with a rule change this season that allows players to play for two clubs in the one campaign and City took full advantage.

Guardiola showed his desire to reach the final for the first time since 2021 as Erling Haaland made a first League Cup start in three years in a strong City selection just days before they visit Manchester United in the Premier League.

Yoane Wissa blazed a glorious early chance over the bar as Newcastle roared out of the blocks in front of a packed St James' Park.

But that was the closest either side came in a cagey first half. City goalkeeper James Trafford had been a long-term target for Newcastle prior to his return to the Etihad from Burnley in July.

The England under-21 international has had to play second fiddle to Gianluigi Donnarumma for most of the season but proved his worth with a stunning save to claw away Wissa's looping header early in the second half. Seconds later, Bruno Guimaraes blasted against the post as Newcastle pressed for the opening.

But they were caught with a sucker punch at the other end when Jeremy Doku sped towards the by-line and his cross was turned by Bernardo Silva into the path of Semenyo to prod home from close range.

Semenyo thought he had a third City goal in two appearances when he acrobatically flicked in from a corner.

However, after a VAR review lasting over five minutes, the officials finally adjudged that Haaland had prevented Malick Thiaw's ability.

Result (Semifinal first leg): Newcastle: 0 lt to Manchester City: 2 (Semenyo 53rd, Cherki 90+8).

Manchester City's Antoine Semenyo (left) celebrates after scoring against Newcastle United on Tuesday. AFP

Griezmann curls it for Atletico

A CORUNA (SPAIN), AFP

Antoine Griezmann's free-kick helped Atletico Madrid squeeze past second-tier Deportivo La Coruna 1-0 on Tuesday to reach the Copa del Rey quarterfinals.

Veteran forward Griezmann's perfectly-placed effort broke the deadlock in the 61st minute, as the sides met for the first time in nearly eight years. Depor supporter Jimmy Romero was viciously beaten and left in the Manzanares river in Madrid by Atletico ultras 11 years ago, dying as a result from his injuries, and he was remembered by a banner behind one goal at the Galician side's Riazor stadium.

The cup match had been declared a high-risk game and Spanish media reported there were some moments of tension between supporters outside, which did not develop into serious incidents.

Off the pace in La Liga and after defeat by rivals Real Madrid in the Spanish Super Cup semifinals last week, a win was vital for Atletico to boost their chances of some silverware this season.

Diego Simeone's side ended up with nothing in their frustrating previous campaign. French forward Griezmann struck the woodwork towards the end of the first half as Atletico could not find a way through.

Simeone hooked out-of-form striker Julian Alvarez before the hour mark, with the Argentina international having scored only once in his last nine matches.

Shortly afterwards Atletico took the lead, with Griezmann delicately curling a free-kick into the top right corner from just outside the area, and it proved decisive.

Results (last-16): Deportivo La Coruna: 0 lt to Atletico Madrid: 1 (Griezmann 61st); Cultural Leonesa: 3 (Calero 16th, 27th, Sobrino 41st) lt to Athletic Bilbao: 4 (Guruzeta 26th, 38th, Sancet 45+3, Gomez 104th) via AET; Real Sociedad: 4 (Turrientes 75th, Zubeldia 90+2) drew with Osasuna: 3 (Moncayola 4th, Oyarzabal 17 og) via penalties, FT: 2-2.

Antoine Griezmann's free-kick helped Atletico Madrid squeeze past second-tier Deportivo La Coruna in the Copa del Rey last-16 clash on Tuesday. REUTERS FILE PHOTO

BANGALORE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
(Wholly owned Government of Karnataka Undertaking)

BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION

(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only)

Inviting tenders for **"Extension of HT, LT lines and providing additional DTC's under System Improvement works on percentage quoting basis under partial Turnkey major materials (Transformers & Rabbit ACSR conductor) supplied by BESCOM in Hosadurga and Srirampura Sub Divisions of Chitradurga Division, Davanagere Circle, CTAZ Zone BESCOM".**

Enq. No's for SC Category:	**SEE/BESCOM/DVG/WORK/SI/HSD/O&M-2/2025-26/02**
Enq. No's for ST Category:	**SEE/BESCOM/DVG/WORK/SI/HSD/MADADAKERE/2025-26/04**
Enq. No's for Category-I:	**SEE/BESCOM/DVG/WORK/SI/SRP/MATHOD/2025-26/07**
Enq. No's for Category-IIA:	**SEE/BESCOM/DVG/WORK/SI/HSD/O&M-1/2025-26/01**
Enq. No's for Others:	**1.SEE/BESCOM/DVG/WORK/SI/HSD/BAGURU/2025-26/03 2.SEE/BESCOM/DVG/WORK/SI/SRP/BELAGUR/2025-26/05 3.SEE/BESCOM/DVG/WORK/SI/SRP/KANCHIPURA/2025-26/06 4.SEE/BESCOM/DVG/WORK/SI/SRP/SRIRAMPURA/2025-26/08**

Availability of Bid documents:**19.01.2026 @ 17:00 Hrs. onwards.** Pre-Bid meeting : **28.01.2026 @ 11:00 Hrs.** Last date for submission of Queries : **29.01.2026 before 17:00 Hrs.** Last date for bid submission : **03.02.2026 @ 17:00 Hrs.** Opening of Technical Bids : **05.02.2026 @ 11:00 Hrs.** Venue : **Office of The Superintending Engineer (Ele)., O&M Circle, Hadadi Road, BESCOM, Davanagere-577002.**

The bid documents can be downloaded and necessary assistance can be obtained through the KPP portal from the website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

E-procurement Help Desk: Phone No: +91-8046010000, +91-8022631200, E-mail: support@ihelpdsk.com, Aspiring bidders needs to be registered on KPP portal. Bidders can take the assistance from the e-procurement during working hours.

Sd/-
Superintending Engineer (Ele),
O&M Circle, Hadadi Road, BESCOM,
Davanagere-577002, Ph: 08192-263616

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Download BESCOM MITHRA Mobile App.

KARNATAKA STATE AKKAMAHADEVI WOMEN UNIVERSITY, VIJAYAPURA.
Registrar Office, Vijayapur.
Phone:08352-229051, www.kswu.ac.in

Short Term E-Tender Notification

Karnataka State Akkamahadevi Women University (herein after referred to as KSAWUV or University) invites Tenders from the "Supplying of Computer, Computer Tables, Revolving Chairs, LAN Networking and Air Conditioner & Science Dept Lab Equipments & Furnitures to UG Block at KASWU, Vijayapura from the eligible and reputed vendors/companies as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurements Act. The Tendered, who have registered under e-governance Department of Karnataka may participate through e-tendering system. Bid documents may be downloaded from the E-procurement Website http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in. The eligible tenderer shall submit their e-Tender in under e-procurement platform as KG-3 scheduled in e-portal. Contact number: 080-25501216, 9449662003

BIDDING SCHEDULE

Sl.No	Task	Date/Time/Details
1	Name of Work	Supplying of Computer, Computer Tables, Revolving chairs, LAN Networking and Air conditioner to UG Block at KSAWU, Vijayapura.
2	Pre Bid Meeting	07.02.2026
3	Date of Publishing Tender Document on e-procurement platform	14.01.2026
4	Tender notification reference number and date	KSAWUV/Store/UG/Computers/2025-26/IND0025
5	Tender Amount put to the tender	Rs. 84,73,160 + GST
6	Last date for uploading the filled tender document	12.02.2026 at 4.00 PM
7	online uploaded tender document hard copy submission date (excluding commercial/financial bid)	12.02.2026 at 4.00 PM
8	Time and Date of opening of Technical Bid	16.02.2026 at 4.00 PM
9	Time and Date of opening of Financial Bid	19.02.2026 at 4.00 PM
10	EMD (Earnest Money Deposit)	Rs. 2,11,829/-
11	Place of opening of Technical Bid and address for communication	The Registrar, Karnataka State Akkamahadevi Women University, Vijayapura - 586108 (Karnataka State)

Sd/- Registrar,
Karnataka State Akkamahadevi Women University, Vijayapura

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ವಿಜಯಪುರ/618/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26

Mangalore varsity bag three gold

BENGALURU, DHNS

Hosts Mangalore University bagged three gold medals on the third day of the 85th All-India Inter-University Athletics Championships at the Swarajya Stadium in Moodbidri on Wednesday.

Ujjawal Chaudhary took the top honours in men's discus throw with an attempt of 54.16 metres while KM Bhagirathi (**in pic**) clocked 1:21:49.95 seconds in women's half marathon to finish first.

Results: Men: 400m: D. Ajay (Madras) 46.83s, 1; Tarandeep Singh (Punjab) 46.91, 2; SM Akash Raj (Mangalore) 47.19, 3. **3000m steeplechase:** Ramvir Singh (Swarmin Gujarat) 8:45.94, 1; M Manoj Kumar (Calicut) 8:48.80, 2; Navratn (VBS) 8:51.03, 3. **Half-marathon:** Ravi Kumar Pal (Lucknow) 1:06:52.42, 1; Kamble Pravin Baban (Shivaji) 1:07:13.04, 2; Satish Kumar Verma (VBS) 1:07:24.44, 3. **Triple jump:** J Mohan Raj (Madras) 16.09m, 1; K Vidya Vikas Kanna (Madurai Kamaraj) 15.56, 2; M Donald (Calicut) 15.50, 3. **Discus throw:** Ujjawal Chaudhary (Mangalore) 54.16m, 1; Ritik (Chandigarh) 53.50, 2; Nagendra Annapp Naik (Mangalore) 53.35, 3. **Decathlon:** R Manoj Kumar (Madras) 6872 pts, 1; Harish (Jain) 6711, 3. Chamanjot Singh (Mangalore) 6202.

Women: 400m: Priya Thakur (Chandigarh) 53.33s, 1; Anjali (MD, Rohtak) 54.05, 2; Aayushi (Maa Shakumbhari) 54.24, 3. **Half marathon:** KM Bhagirathi (Mangalore) 1:21:49.95, 1; Maya (SSJ) 1:22:13.44, 2; Ganga (CCC) 1:23:07.35. **Javelin throw:** Deepika (Chandigarh) 54.64m, 1; Jyoti (Guru Kashi) 52.59, 2; Poonam (Chandigarh) 50.85, 3. **Mixed 4x400m relay:** Mangalore University (Saketh Minj, Rekha Basappa, Akash Raj and Manisha) 3:24.83, 1; Panjab 3:24.87, 2. Guru Nanak Dev 3:25.86, 3.

Samarth double gives CC XI lead

LOCAL CRICKET

BENGALURU, DHNS: Samarth Suresh scored an unbeaten 238 not out to hand Combined City XI the first-innings lead in a drawn match against Mysore Zone in the KSCA U-14 Inter-Zonal tournament.

His double ton took Combined City XI to 379/3 in 90 overs with Saachin Suresh Araganji contributing 77. This came after their bowlers, led by Krishna's 3/19, had bundled out Mysore Zone for 167.

Brief scores: Mysore Zone: 167 all out in 65 overs (Nikhil G Chethan 56, Jayanth Gowda 31; Ibrahim Khan 2-35, Krishna 3-19, Saachin Araganji 2-7) & 98/3 in 35 overs (Nikhil G Chethan 48 n.o., Arya Ayyappan 2-36) drew with Combined City XI: 379/3 in 90 overs (Saachin Suresh Araganji 77, Samarth Suresh 238 n.o.) Combined City XI: 3 points, Mysore Zone: 1 point.

President's XI: 410/6 in 90 overs (Prabhav Pydah 68, Rajveer Mehta 216, Ryan Tomar 44, Aaryan Nagesh 50; Rajdeep Awad 2-74) drew with Tumkur Zone: 237 all out in 67.3 overs (Mohammed Yaseen 61, Abdul Raheem 33, Aayat Khan 49, Tarun BN 35; Aniket Chaturvedi 3/29, Aaryan Nagesh 4-23). President's XI: 3, Tumkur Zone: 1.

Vice President's XI: 200 all out in 76.4 overs (Gagan P Maiya 26, Aadit Kaul 66, Gaurav Jeevan 57; Swasthik S 2-35, Adarsh Hitthadi VH 4-34) & 43/1 in 10 overs (Hridaan Sai 34 n.o.) drew with Shivamogga Zone: 182 all out in 80.3 overs (Adarsh Hitthadi VH 48, Abdul Maaz 38, Sharav Koundinya 2-36, Vyom Naidu 4-34). Vice Presidents XI: 3, Shivamogga Zone: 1.

Dharwad Zone: 276/6 in 90 overs (Akshay Baligar 75, Ajay A Lamani 59, Yesh Thakur 88, Ashwwath Nagarajan 2-13) drew with Bangalore City XI: 251 all out in 83.3 overs (Sachith Shetty 79, Hannan Zaki Ahmad 117 n.o., Atharv Karadi 2-51, Alok M Japannavar 2-67, Vivaan Bhusad 3-28). Dharwad Zone: 3, Bangalore City XI: 1.

Mangalore Zone: 126 all out in 69.2 overs (Manyath S Shetty 31, Bhavin Joe Francis 2-22, Sai Yashmith Selapaka 2-24, SK Sharath 2-22, Saurjyesh Das 2-12) & 41/1 in 11.5 overs drew with Bangalore Zone: 243 all out in 89.4 overs (Aarav Srivastava 22, Mohammed Umair 40, Saurjyesh Das 105 n.o.; Lakshya Devadiga 2-33, Pradyoth Rao Jadhav 2-46, Manvith D 2-50). Bangalore Zone: 3, Mangalore Zone: 1.

Secretary's XI: 343/6 in 90 overs (Pratham Satish 95, Sachit S Galatagi 88, Cheran Tej Raju C 95; Varun Kumar MG 3-70) & 35/2 in 16 overs drew with Raichur Zone: 182 all out in 61.3 overs (Axaya Kumar 68, Athmik Pujari 31; Vinjamuri Rushyanth 2-27, Cheran Tej Raju C 3-51, Meghan KJ 3-19). Secretary's XI: 3, Raichur Zone: 1.

Sjoerd Marijne

Marijne formally joins Indian women's hockey team

NEW DELHI, PTI: Dutchman Sjoerd Marijne on Wednesday formally joined the Indian women's hockey team as its chief coach, renewing his association with the squad after a fruitful four-year first stint from 2017 to 2021.

He was reappointed to the post nearly two weeks ago, marking his return to the set-up after guiding the side to a historic fourth-place finish at the Tokyo Olympics.

Hockey India posted a photo of Marijne being welcomed by the country's top sports official and administrators of the federation.

Marijne also posted a photo of his arrival at the IGI Airport with a caption that read "With fresh energy back in India".

In his job, the 51-year-old will be supported by Matias Vila as the team's analytical coach.

Marijne's first big challenge as chief coach will be the Women's World Cup Qualifiers in Hyderabad from March 8 to 14.

Marijne replaced Harendra Singh, who resigned in December last year due to poor results. In his first stint as chief coach of the Indian women's hockey team, Marijne also led the side to the World League semifinals in 2017 and silver medals at the 2018 Women's Asian Champions Trophy and Jakarta Asian Games. Then, in 2019, India qualified for the Tokyo Olympics, beating USA 6-5 on aggregate in the FIH Olympic Qualifiers.

The national coaching camp is scheduled to begin on January 19 in SAI, Bengaluru.

MCA to introduce central contracts for Mumbai players

MUMBAI, PTI: The Mumbai Cricket Association on Wednesday said it would introduce central contracts for its senior team players along with a scouting tournament for discovering young talent for its T20 league.

These decisions were taken by the MCA's apex council meeting which also decided to introduce an inter-college tournament to be named after former India captain Dilip Vengsarkar.

Ind-Pak ticket sales crash site

NEW DELHI, PTI: BookMyShow website crashed on Wednesday minutes after the second phase of ticket sales for the men's T20 World Cup went live, overwhelmed by massive demand for the India–Pakistan clash in Colombo.

The fixture, included in this phase of allocations, triggered a surge in traffic that led to an unprecedented number of simultaneous login and purchase attempts, causing the servers to go down.

◆ ON TV ◆

CRICKET

U-19 World Cup: India vs US, Zimbambwe vs Scotland, Tanzania vs West Indies. **LIVE** on **Star Sports 2 & JioHotstar.**

VHT semifinal: Karnataka vs Vidarbha **(1:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **JioHotstar & Star Sports Khel.**

WPL: Mumbai Indians vs UP Warriorz **(7:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports 1 & JioHotstar.**

HOCKEY

HIL: JSW Soorma Hockey Club vs HIL GC **(7:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Ten 1.**

CRICKET SECOND ODI

Kiwis level series in style

Mitchell slams unbeaten century as New Zealand down India by 7 wickets

RAJKOT, PTI

New Zealand's Daryl Mitchell celebrates after scoring a century in the second ODI against India at Rajkot's Niranjan Shah Stadium on Wednesday. PTI

Indian spinners were outbowled on home turf once again and KL Rahul's unbeaten ton was eclipsed by Daryl Mitchell's splendid 131 not out as New Zealand levelled the three-match series 1-1 with a seven-wicket win in the second ODI here on Wednesday.

New Zealand not only adapted but also executed better than India on a sluggish wicket here at the Niranjan Shah Stadium to keep the hosts to 284/7 despite Rahul's 91-ball 112 not out (9 fours, 1 six), and overhauled the target in 47.3 overs to end at 286 for three.

The series-deciding third ODI will be played in Indore on Sunday.

Will Young and Mitchell, among the architects of New Zealand's 3-0 Test series win over India on their previous visit, batted with poise and control even as the asking rate hovered over six an over.

They cruised at a little above five during their second-wicket association which consumed 152 balls for 162 runs, and there wasn't any late hiccup to prevent a turnaround.

Young's (87 from 98 balls; 7 fours) solidity in the middle was complemented by the adroitness of Mitchell, who brought out almost all kinds of sweep shots to notch up his third ton against India and overall eighth, finishing at 131 not out from 117 balls (11 fours, 2 sixes).

New Zealand's triumph in a 50-overs match also took the spotlight back onto a problem which India have faced in Tests for about two years now, with the home team's spin attack being outmatched by that of the visitors, albeit that's been mostly in red-ball cricket.

Debutant left-arm spinner Jayden Lennox, summoned on this trip as replacement of Mitchell Santner, kept a tight leash on Indian batters returning 10-0-42-1 while Kuldeep Yadav (10-0-82-1) kept bowling short and failed to give the ball a flight despite repeated messages from Rahul behind the wickets.

And when Kuldeep did give it a flight and forced a mishit, Prasidh Krishna dropped a regulation chance at long-on in the 36th over to give Mitchell a lifeline on 80. Kuldeep finally broke the third-wicket stand dismissing Young and Mohammed Siraj pinned Mitchell leg-before soon after, but the decision was overturned via DRS as there was an inside edge.

Michael Bracewell also returned a tidy 1/34 in 10 overs.

SCOREBOARD

INDIA		NEW ZEALAND	
Rohit c Young b Clarke	24	Conway b Rana	16
Gill c Mitchell b Jamieson	56	Nicholls b Prasidh Krishna	10
Kohli b Clarke	23	Young c Reddy b Yadav	87
Shreyas c Bracewell b Clarke	8	Mitchell not out	131
Rahul not out	112	Phillips not out	32
Jadeja c &b Bracewell	27	Extras (LB-5, WD-5)	10
Reddy c Phillips b Foulkes	20	**Total (For 3 wkts in 47.3 overs) 286**	
Rana c Bracewell b Lennox	2	**Fall of wickets:** 1-22, 2-46, 3-208.	
Siraj not out	2	**Bowling:** Mohammed Siraj 9-0-41-0, Harshit Rana 9.3-1-52-1, Prasidh Krishna 9-0-49-1, Nitish Kumar Reddy 2-0-13-0, Ravindra Jadeja 8-0-44-0 Kuldeep Yadav 10-0-82-1.	
Extras (LB-2, NB-1, WD-7)	10		
Total (For 7 wkts in 50 overs)....284			
Fall of wickets: 1-70, 2-99, 3-115, 4-118, 5-191, 6-248, 7-256.			
Bowling: Jamieson 10-2-70-1, Foulkes 9-0-67-1, Clarke 8-0-56-3, Lennox 10-0-42-1, Bracewell 10-1-34-1, Phillips 3-0-13-0.			
		Result: New Zealand won by 7 wickets. **Series:** New Zealand level three-match series 1-1. **PoM:** Daryl Mitchell. **Third ODI:** Jan 18 (Indore).	

Washington out of T20Is

India all-rounder Washington Sundar was on Wednesday ruled out of the five-match T20 series against New Zealand due to a side strain, reports PTI from New Delhi.

Washington had experienced discomfort in his left lower rib area while bowling during the first ODI against New Zealand. Subsequently, he was ruled out of the three match ODI series.

Lee, Shafali steer Delhi to first win

UP Warriorz fall to last-ball defeat despite fightback

NAVI MUMBAI, PTI

Lizelle Lee was at her destructive best for the second game in a row as Delhi Capitals defeated UP Warriorz by seven wickets for their first win of the 2026 Women's Premier League here on Wednesday.

An inexplicable batting collapse in the death overs limited UP Warriorz to a below par 154 for eight. The Meg Lanning-side lost as many as six wickets in the last five overs and managed just 24 runs.

Lee, who smashed 86 in the previous game, did bulk of the work in the run chase for Delhi Capitals with 67 off 44 balls. Her knock included eight fours and three cracking sixes.

Lee, who last played for South Africa in 2022, is making a strong case for a national comeback with her performances in WPL. The experienced Laura Wolvaardt (25 not out off 24) got Delhi Capitals over the line off the final ball of the match.

Captain Jemimah Rodrigues (21 off 12) was dismissed in the penultimate over and the disappointment of not staying till the end was visible on her face.

The match somehow stretched to the last ball after a cruising Delhi Capitals could not get the job done earlier. Sophie Ecclestone bowled a solid 20th over but Delhi Capitals managed to save the blushes as Wolvaardt hit the winning four.

It was the first win for the Rodrigues-led unit in three attempts while UP Warriorz are yet to taste success this season.

Besides Lee's explosive effort, Shafali Verma made 36 off 32 balls at the top of the order before falling to a reverse sweep.

Earlier, the debatable move to retire out Harleen Deol on 47 did not work as the Capitals limited Warriorz to a modest total.

Warriorz' troubles at the top of the order persisted with Kiran Navgire falling without adding to the scoreboard.

Captain Lanning (54 off 38) top-scored for Warriorz while number three Phoebe Litchfield (27 off 20) was stumped off Sneh Rana first ball after powerplay.

Brief scores: UP Warriorz: 154/8 in 20 overs (Meg Lanning 54, Phoebe Litchfield 27, Harleen Deol 47; Marizanne Kapp 2-24, Shafali Verma 2-16) lt to Delhi Capitals 158/3 in 20 overs (Shafali Verma 36, Lizelle Lee 67, Laura Wolvaardt 25 n.o.; Deepti Sharma 2-26) by 7 wkts. **PoM:** Shafali Verma.

Delhi Capitals' Shafali Verma scored 36 after taking two wickets against UP Warriorz at the DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai on Wednesday. PTI

India's Kidambi Srikanth during his first-round win against compatriot Tharun Mannepalli in the Indian Open in New Delhi on Wednesday. REUTERS

Sindhu exits, Srikanth advances

NEW DELHI,, PTI

Two-time Olympic medallist P V Sindhu was knocked out of the India Open even as Kidambi Srikanth and HS Prannoy progressed to the second round on a mixed day for the hosts at the USD 950,000 Super 750 badminton tournament, here on Wednesday.

Sindhu, who reached the semifinals of Malaysia Super 1000 last week, couldn't maintain the pressure after narrowly pocketing the opening game to eventually go down 22-20, 12-21, 15-21 to Vietnam's Thuy Linh Nguyen in 68 minutes.

Earlier, former world No. 1 Srikanth had to dig deep to outlast fellow Indian Tharun Mannepalli 15-21, 21-6, 21-19, while Malvika Bansod, returning from an injury layoff, displayed patience and defensive solidity to beat Chinese Taipei's Pai Yu Po 21-18, 21-19.

Prannoy, who received a last-minute entry in the tournament, made it count as he outwitted last year's runner-up Lee Cheuk Yiu 22-20, 21-18 to advance to the second round. He will next face the eighth seed and former world champion Loh Kean Yew of Singapore.

Tanvi Sharma, silver medallist at the BWF World Junior Championship, then played her heart out before going down fighting 20-22, 21-18, 13-21 to world No. 2 Wang Zhi Yi.

Indian women's doubles campaign also got off to a positive note with Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand cruising past Thailand's Ornnicha Jongsathapornparn and Sukitta Suwachai 21-15, 21-11.

However, it was a disappointing day for India in mixed doubles, with three Indian pairs exiting the tournament at an early stage.

Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto went down 15-21, 14-21 to Thailand's Pakkapon Teeraratsakul and Sapsiree Taerattanachai, while Rohan Kapoor and Ruthvika Shivani Gadde lost 19-21, 14-21 to Germany's Marvin Seidel and Thuc Phuong Nguyen.

Ashith Surya and Amrutha Pramuthesh were also shown the door after a 15-21, 7-21 defeat to Japan's Yuichi Shimogami and Sayaka Hobara.

Antonsen pulls out due to 'extreme pollution'

World No. 3 Anders Antonsen on Wednesday said he has withdrawn from the ongoing India Open due to "extreme" air pollution in the national capital and copped a USD 5,000 fine from the Badminton World Federation (BWF) for his decision, reports PTI.

A four-time World Championships medallist, Antonsen's remarks came a day after fellow Dane Mia Blichfeldt criticised the playing conditions at the USD 950,000 event.

"Many are curious why I have pulled out of the India Open for the third consecutive year. Due to the extreme pollution in Delhi at the moment, I don't think it's a place to host a badminton tournament," Antonsen wrote on his Instagram page.

Kidambi Srikanth defended the playing conditions, asserting that he has yet to encounter anything "bad" at the venue and that minor organisational challenges are not specific to one host nation.

Aus to play in Pak before T20 World Cup

LAHORE, PTI: Australia will play three T20 Internationals in Lahore prior to the ICC T20 World Cup in India and Sri Lanka, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said on Wednesday.

Australia will play day-night matches at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore on January 29, 31 and February 1 before both teams leave for the mega event. While Australia are playing their World Cup group games in India, Pakistan will be based in Sri Lanka for their matches.

This is the first time since April 2022 that Australia will tour Pakistan for a T20 series as they last came to the country to play a Test series and then a white-ball rubber that year. The Australians will reach Lahore on January 28. Australia had, however, played some of their Champions Trophy matches last year in Pakistan.

Indian colts all set to flex their muscles

BULAWAYO (ZIMBABWE), PTI

India's Vaibhav Suryavanshi (left) and Ayush Mhatre are two young stars who are expected to set the U-19 World Cup, that kicks off on Thursday, on fire. FILE PHOTOS

LIVE 1 PM JIOHOTSTAR

Favourites India will look to flaunt their superabundance of talent as they begin the quest for a record-extending sixth Under-19 World Cup title with what is expected to be a rather easy outing against USA in the ICC showpiece beginning here on Thursday.

Champions in five of the 16 editions, India are by far the most dominant team in the history of the competition, which started back in 1988 with Australia emerging winners in the inaugural event.

Having missed out on the last edition in 2024, when they lost to Australia in the summit showdown, India, who have won the trophy in 2000, 2008, 2012 and 2022 besides 2018, will be keen to add a sixth title to their tally this time around.

The squad looks balanced and formidable on paper, and 13 wins in their last 16 matches, including series victories in England, Australia and South Africa, clearly show that the team knows how to win, more importantly away from home.

Spearheading the Indian challenge will be wunderkind Vaibhav Suryavanshi, skipper Ayush Mhatre, vice-captain Vihaan Malhotra, and top-order player Aaron George, who was the top-scorer for his side with 228 runs in the last U-19 Asia Cup, where arch-rivals Pakistan stunned them in the summit clash.

Though Mhatre's form has been a bit of a concern in recent times, the side also features Abhigyan Kundu, who has done exceedingly well. At just 14 years old, Suryavanshi is already one of the most talked-about young cricketers in the world, having first made headlines with an electrifying 35-ball century in the Indian Premier League's 2025 season.

The precocious Suryavanshi seems destined for stardom but there are others too in this Indian setup who are seen as stars of the future and would carry forward the legacy left behind by the likes of Kohli, Rohit and Gill.

India squad: Ayush Mhatre (capt), RS Ambrish, Kanishk Chouhan, D Deepesh, Mohamed Enaan, Aaron George, Abhigyan Kundu, Kishan Kumar Singh, Vihaan Malhotra, Udhav Mohan, Henil Patel, Khilan A Patel, Harvansh Singh, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, Vedant Trivedi.

U-19 WC FACT FILE

- Started in 1988, so far 15 editions have been held with seven different champions
- There was a gap of 10 years between the first and the second editions
- Australia were the inaugural champions, held at home, where they beat Pakistan in the final
- India won their first title in 2000 under Mohammed Kaif in Sri Lanka
- With five titles, India have been crowned the most in the biennial event
- Australia have second most titles at four

Lancers jump to top of table

RANCHI, PTI: Alexander Hendrickx (**in pic**) found the net to help Kalinga Lancers register a 1-0 win against Hyderabad Toofans and maintain their unbeaten run in the Men's Hockey India League here on Wednesday.

There was little to separate the two sides in the opening quarter with both teams having four circle entries in the first fifteen minutes.

While Toofans had more of the possession, it was the Lancers who registered the only attempt on target as they threatened to make inroads with swift counterattacks.

Liam Henderson had the opportunity to give his side an early lead, but he was denied by Jean-Paul Danneberg, keeping the teams at level terms at the end of the first quarter.

There was more attacking impetus from both teams to begin the second quarter as they made inroads, earning a penalty corner each. Keeping the lion's share of possession, the Toofans upped the ante significantly with 12 circle entries compared to the Lancers' seven circle entries.

Despite Toofans dominating possession, it was the Lancers who came closest to opening the scoring with Liam Henderson's powerful attempt that hit the post. However, neither side could break the deadlock in what was an engaging first half.

Lancers got the opening goal of the game against the run of play after Hendrickx (40') converted his dragflick from a penalty corner, scoring his fifth goal of the season to give his side the lead.

The Lancers managed to see out the game rather comfortably with the Toofans failing to register an attempt on goal in the last 15 minutes.

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